

BUREAUCRATIC LOGJAM
THE FEAR FACTOR

MODI'S NEW MANTRA
WOOING RIVALS TO WIN

PAHLAJ NIHALANI
BUTCHER OF BOLLYWOOD

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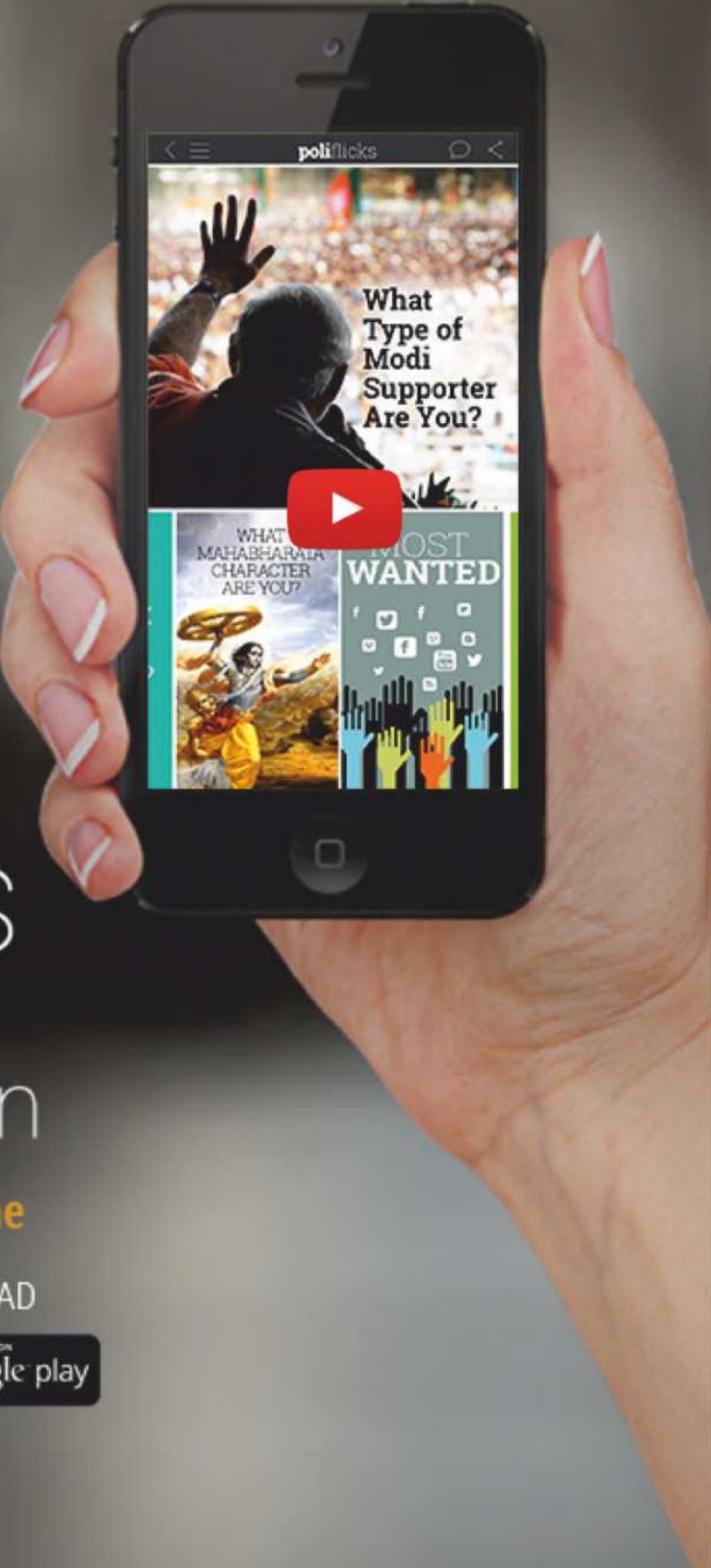
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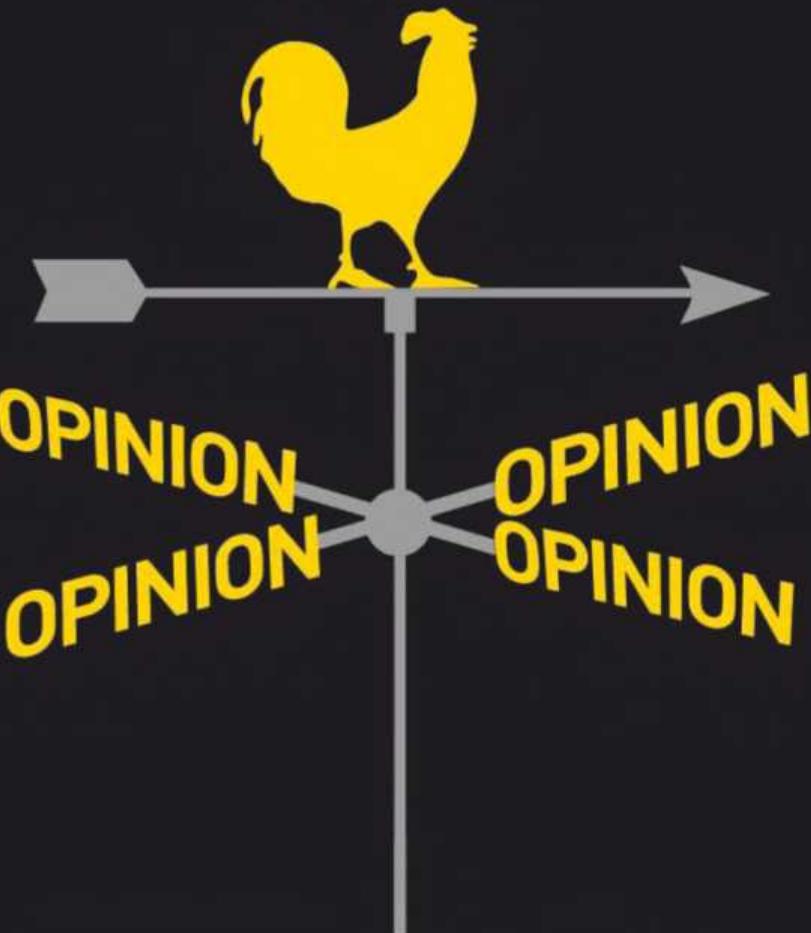
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FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The awareness about the problems of environmental degradation has been with us for over two decades. This is a man-made problem but man has not been able to solve it in spite of the fact that it affects the entire world, simultaneously, all at one go. There have been dire warnings of the effects of climate change and increasing manifestations of it in freak weather phenomena. In 2015 alone, we've seen floods in the arid Atacama desert of Chile, four concurrent cyclones in the eastern hemisphere, and temperatures rising to 17 degrees Celsius in frozen Antarctica. The year 2015 will be the hottest in the planet's history, only to be beaten by 2016.

It is in the middle of this weather upheaval that world leaders from more than 190 countries met in Paris for the climate change summit. The road to Paris has been a long one. The journey began at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, when 172 governments first recognised global warming as a threat. The summit lay down common but differentiated responsibilities on nations, recognising that developed countries needed to do more to control emissions because of their larger role in global warming.

Rio 1992 led to the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, in which commitments were made to bring emissions to below 1990 levels. But the bigger nations, including United States, did not ratify these protocols because of the investment it would take to move from traditional fuels to renewable energy, and cited the growth of countries such as China and India as an excuse.

The Kyoto Protocol, which lasts until 2020, needs to be revised on a war footing. The world is in agreement that a 2-degree Celsius increase in global temperature will have a catastrophic effect, and that if greenhouse gases are spewed at the current rate, the world will be about 3.6 degrees warmer by the middle of the century, making global warming irreversible.

In Paris, the world had hoped to hear positive noises, particularly from leaders of developed nations. But the new Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) are voluntary, not legally binding, and the deadlock between developed and developing nations continues on various fronts.

Principal among them is the reluctance of developed nations to vacate carbon space and move towards renewable energy in a manner that assures development for all. For example, India, whose per capita emission of 1.7 metric tonnes is about one-third the global average, is saying it would be "morally wrong" if developed countries that have exploited fossil fuels for decades shift the burden of reducing emissions on developing countries.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is attempting to make India part of the solution. He has focused on harnessing solar energy through a global alliance of 121 nations. But until developed nations commit to reducing emissions, to upgrade technologies for renewable energy, and to help finance developing countries to do the same, the problem cannot be addressed.

For the cover story, Group Editorial Director (Publishing) Raj Chengappa travelled to Paris. Chengappa has been covering climate change for over two decades and was a member of the Prime Minister's Council on Climate Change. He brings us an on-the-spot report on the crisis facing the world, the inability of leaders to come to a consensus, and what this could mean for the planet. We also look at 10 cutting-edge technologies that could make a difference and pave an alternative path to saving the world.

Climate change is the most critical issue facing us today. The Paris summit could have been a game changer. But it has turned out to be just another line in a long line of could-have-beens. The world, mired in its own national interests, is still being unable to find common ground to save the Earth that nourishes it. Shame.

(Aroon Purie)



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COVER STORY
CLIMATE CHANGE

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On-the-spot report from Paris climate change summit.
ALSO Ten technologies that could make a difference.

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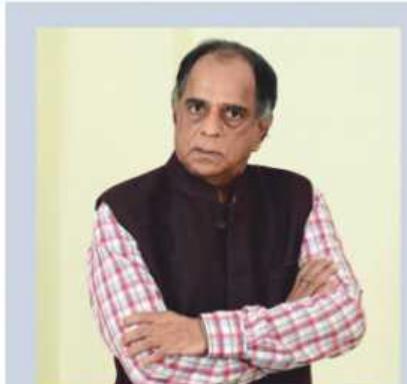
How Ashwin went from warming the Team India bench for most of 2014 to becoming the most successful bowler in the world in 2015.

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After the Bihar debacle, the Modi government seems to have realised that reaching out to opposition parties is a better strategy than inviting their non-cooperation in Parliament.

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CENSORSHIP****36 | Butcher of Bollywood**

Self-appointed custodian of India's cultural sensibilities, CBFC chief Pahlaj Nihalani wages war on immorality at the movies. He's taking his new role so seriously that the film industry can no longer dismiss him as a joke.

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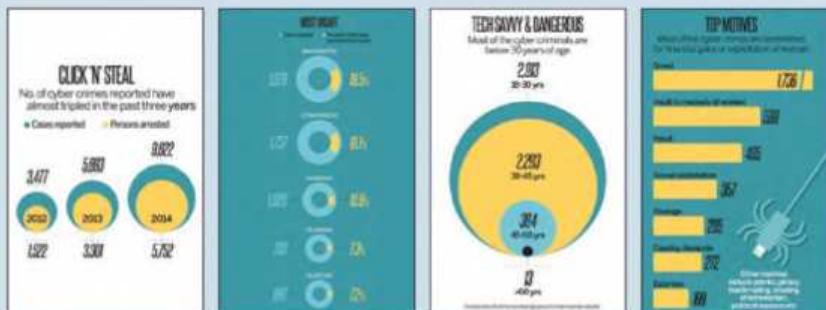
India's new ball sensation How R. Ashwin has emerged as one of the most potent spinners to open the bowling. <http://bit.ly/1MTvBeY>



The growing gender gap Despite the government launching schemes to save the girl child, the numbers on the ground have failed to improve. <http://bit.ly/10t5de6>



Virtual world, real crime As we spend more time online, the number of cyber criminals has also gone up. <http://bit.ly/1RjOrkh>



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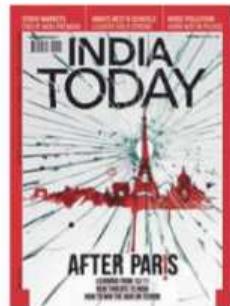
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After Paris

NOVEMBER 30, 2015

The Paris attacks have confirmed that the Islamic State is now the world's pre-eminent jihadi organisation posing a clear and present danger



The IS is getting bolder with every strike. Its reach and acceptability among young Muslims is growing. The Paris attacks could be the first of many such planned attacks.

A. SRIKANTAIAH, Bengaluru

Join Hands to Fight Terror

A terror attack in the West creates a far greater impact than any in the Indian subcontinent, Africa or elsewhere (The New Empire of Terror, November 30). The Paris attacks are no different. The developed and powerful nations of the world have hurriedly called meetings and pledged support to the war on terror. For India, this could mean that it can finally convince the West about Pakistan's alleged role in supporting terror organisations.

ANJUM M. SAMEL, Thane

We need to build a global consensus against terror if we are to fight it effectively. To do that, the United Nations must identify the countries which are providing assistance to terrorist organisations such as the al Qaeda and the Islamic State. Once such countries are identified, the UN should impose strict sanctions on them, and deter them from funding

terrorist organisations.
AMBAR MALICK, Kolkata

The attacks in Paris show that suicide squads can always take the best of police and intelligence services by surprise. It is time the United Nations frames a global charter to neutralise the growing threat of Islamic terror. Further delay in taking concerted action against terror will lead to more innocents losing lives to deadly attacks.
K. S. JAYATHEERTHA, Bengaluru

Bihar Win Is No Real Victory



While the Congress has surprised everyone by winning 27 seats in the recently concluded Bihar elections, the fact remains that the party's success has come by latching on to the coat-tails of the JD(U) and the RJD (Bouncing Back with Bihar, November 30). No wonder then that the newly formed government in Bihar, under the leadership of Nitish Kumar, has little presence of the Congress. For Rahul Gandhi, a victory should mean nothing short of bringing the party back to power in Delhi and validating its position as the only party that matters in Indian politics.

ASHUTOSH PUNTAMBEKAR, via email



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AFTER PARIS

It will be a herculean task

to fight the Islamic State (IS), given the reach and ferocity of its attacks.

Sanjiv Gupta

The IS has bitten off more than it can chew, attacking Russia, the West—through Paris, and even China. A combined strike on the IS is expected soon.

Ashok

THE TRUTH ABOUT TIPU SULTAN

The current debate on Tipu Sultan doesn't question his nationalism, instead it's about probing his secular credentials.

Kumar S

BOUNCING BACK WITH BIHAR

Only by reinventing itself can the Congress bounce back. In Bihar, it had a minuscule role to play in the grand alliance's success. In subsequent elections, it must dare to go solo and test the waters.

Vikas Randev

The monstrosity of the Paris attacks is chilling. It once again shows how the West is also vulnerable to terrorist attacks and lends credence to India's argument that terror is now a global phenomenon and can be countered only through joint action.
J. AKSHOBHYA, Mysuru

If there is one country in the world that is unshakably sure of itself, its history, and its inclusivity, it is France. The attacks in Paris are therefore an at-

tack on this very spirit of certitude and social inclusiveness. Further, the eerie similarities between the Mumbai and Paris attacks underscore a simple truth: radicalised militants view everyone as an enemy—be it Hindus, Muslims or Christians.

J.S. ACHARYA, Hyderabad

For People's Sake

The government should go all out to get support for the goods and services tax bill (Grand GST Hits a Hurdle, Again, November 30). If implemented, the GST will help bring the prices of commodities down by several notches, besides making tax evasion virtually impossible. The Prime Minister's initiative to reach out to the opposition to ensure a consensus on the bill is a step in the right direction. The winter session will, however, see if the bill manages to pass muster.

SHUBHAM ANAND, Noida

Punish Offenders

The story on noise pollution covers various aspects of the menace but a helpless note rings in the concluding paragraph (Shhh. Can't Hear You!, November 30). Using earplugs is no solution to the problem. Causing an irreparable damage to someone's ears or affecting the health of an elderly is an offence



Mixed Reactions

Amit Shah needs to be less authoritarian, less acerbic and more appreciative and accommodative of local leaders (Rising after the Hiding, November 30). Rubbing senior leaders the wrong way will cost the party more such defeats in the future. Shah must try and learn from Vajpayee and Advani. Both were unfailingly courteous and welcoming towards colleagues. They maintained cordial relationships with leaders from rival parties and the media.

PADMINI RAGHAVENDRA,
Secunderabad

The main reason for the BJP's rout in Bihar elections was not the strength of the grand alliance but the infighting within the party. The party is filled with foul-mouthed and power-hungry sharks, who are willing to embarrass it on public platforms. Only an error in ticket distribution cannot result in such a humiliating defeat for the party. It is too early to put all the blame on party president Amit Shah, who has scripted many grand victories for the party in the past.

HENA PRASUN, Ahmedabad

almost criminal in nature. The government should strike at the root of the menace and ban the manufacture of fire crackers. Playing loud speakers and honking above the permissible limit should attract strict punishment.

SANJIT GHATAK, West Bengal

The story serves as an eye-opener. Most of us don't think about others' discomfort while bursting crackers or playing music on loudspeakers. The local bodies along with schools and colleges can run awareness campaigns in neighbourhoods on the effects of noise pollution. Such efforts will go a long way in checking the noise pollution levels in cities.

GARVIT JAIN, *ljain*

Costly Move?

If Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah thought that celebrating the birth anniversary of Tipu Sultan, a Muslim ruler, can burnish the party's secular credentials, the move seemed to have boomeranged (The Truth about Tipu Sultan, November 30). The fall-out—heighened communal tensions and divisive tendencies in the state. The assessment of Tipu Sultan and of his rule should be left to historians. Politicians should not play with history.

J. AKSHAY, Bengaluru

The Tower of Babble

The first to warn the delegates was the 'Rainbow Warrior', the Greenpeace organisation's protest ship. The day before the Earth Summit, officially known as the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), began, it sailed into the Guanara Bay in Rio de Janeiro with a huge poster fluttering on its mast, that read: "UNCED: Don't sell out." Then the World Wide Fund for Nature sent up a giant balloon that said: "We want action not hot air!"



GREENPEACE'S RAINBOW WARRIOR DOCKS AT RIO

Yet, as the lawns of the venue—the Rio Centre—crawled with 130 heads of state and government for what UNCED chief Maurice Strong called "parliament of the planet", they had little more to offer than a symbolic summit to save the earth.

The two years of pre-summit haranguing and the fortnight of final negotiations produced only reams of paper. Instead of offering commitments, it turned out to be more like what nature photographer Robert Ketchum termed a "Tower of Babble".

While the summit may have narrowed the chasm between the rich and poor nations on key environmental issues, it failed to bridge it. What it produced was a toothless convention on greenhouse gases that set no targets for reduction.

*by Raj Chengappa
in Rio de Janeiro*

June 30, 1992



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LOOK BEYOND THE PREAMBLE

There has been a lot of public debate in the last one year on the words ‘secular’ and ‘socialist’ appearing in the Preamble of the Constitution. No doubt, the two words were inserted into the Preamble by the 42nd Amendment in 1976—the last phase of Emergency proclaimed by the then prime minister Indira Gandhi—when most opposition leaders were imprisoned and when in a dark moment the Supreme Court denied the right of habeas corpus even in cases of mistaken identity. But the 42nd Amendment was upheld as a legal and binding amendment.

The post-Emergency governing elite chose not to delete these words. The 44th amendment was piloted by the then law minister Shanti Bhushan, and Atal Bihari Vajpayee and L.K. Advani were leading members of the cabinet.

Three years before the Emergency, in the Kesavananda Bharati case in 1973, the Supreme Court declared that ‘secularism’ and ‘socialism’ were aspects of the basic structure of the Constitution, and constitutional secularism was affirmed in 1994 in the Bommai case. These decisions were as late as October this year fully followed in the invalidation of the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) amendment. The deletion, if desired by Parliament, of the two words in the Preamble has to be a constitutional amendment process and will have to run the disciplinary gauntlet of the basic structure. Even systemic political dislike and occasional governmental advertisements (deleting these two words from the Preamble) cannot otherwise change the constitutional realities.

Much has been made of Dr B.R. Ambedkar’s response to an amendment moved by professor K.T. Shah in the Constituent Assembly on November 15, 1948, where he did not see any need to add the two words to the Preamble. His overarching rationale was that there were certain “matters which must be decided by the people themselves according to time and circumstances” and these may not be “laid down in the Constitution itself, because that is destroying democracy altogether”. He added: “If you state in the Constitution that the social organisation of the state shall take a particular form, you are, in my judgement, taking away the liberty of the people to decide what should be the social organisation in which they wish to live.”

Closely read, his response was directed only to the term ‘socialist’ character of the Constitution. The Constitution he drafted had ample

assurances for the state’s secularism. The Constitution did not declare God’s will or supremacy; it abolished untouchability, trafficking in human beings, and agrestic serfdom as constitutional offences (incidentally ours is the first modern constitution to declare offences against it and give Parliament the power to legislate about it, despite the federal design and detail); endowed the freedom of conscience and practices of religion; gave minorities the basic right to establish and maintain educational institutions of their own choice; and embodied so many assurances of constitutional secularity. Ambedkar and the Constituent Assembly felt that nothing much by way of secularism remained to be achieved by adding this word to the Preamble. They also felt the same about ‘socialism’ because the directive principles were, and are, replete with its attributes. Nevertheless, the Supreme Court has also felt it necessary to reiterate since 1973 the need to accentuate ‘secularism’ and ‘socialism’ as essential features of the basic structure.

One must conclude that the constitutional debate is long over, even when a new political debate seems to have begun around the meaning of constitutional secularism. The directions in which such a debate should move remain deeply contested. However, one must rule out firmly arguments for a Hindu rashtra, allowing non-Hindus a subordinated place. This is what the freedom movement rejected. Neither does the Constitution contemplate that born, or naturalised, Indian citizens should be asked or made to reside in other countries. Still less, does it allow citizens of this country to be demoted to the status of mere subjects—the newrightless people. The Preamble to the Constitution highlights fraternity as a value as important as liberty and equality; and there is now a fundamental duty of all Indian citizens, under Article 51-A of the Constitution, to promote and preserve the ‘composite culture of India’.

Constitutional secularism means that no particular group should acquire the syndrome of being persecuted or develop the symptoms of oppression. All communities are to some measure affected by these. A mature political debate will, with great care, identify the specific constituencies and redress their injustices rather than quibbling about the terms of the Preamble.

Upendra Baxi is emeritus professor of law, University of Warwick, and former vice chancellor, Delhi University



Constitutional secularism means that no particular group should acquire the syndrome of being persecuted or develop the symptoms of oppression.

BUREAUCRACY BLUES

Handling a restive bureaucracy is emerging as a challenge for the Modi government. Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari recently fumed over the non-cooperation from bureaucrats. The IAS



Illustration by SAURABH SINGH



SPECIAL CARE

Kerala is taking special interest in issues concerning non-resident Keralites by setting up an NRI commission, following in the footsteps of Punjab. CM Oommen Chandy proposes to introduce appropriate legislation during the winter session of the assembly which opened on November 30. A five-member panel, headed by a retired high court judge, will address all issues, including fake recruitments and disputes over property and investments in Kerala. The prospects of treating them as export of human services and offering incentives are also being explored instead of levying tax on them.

OUT OF SYNC

BJP President Amit Shah's speech in Dibrugarh, Assam, on November 27 reveals that the party leadership is out of sync with state politics. Shah first said the BJP won 7 seats in Assam in the 2014 Lok Sabha polls under the leadership of former BJP chief Siddhartha Bhattacharya, much to the embarrassment of incumbent president Sarbananda Sonowal, who was the chief of the state unit then. Shah didn't stop there. He went on to say the BJP would introduce the 108 ambulance service in the state. The service was, in fact, launched under the Congress government in 2008 by now BJP member Himanta Biswa Sarma, who was standing next to Shah in the rally.



KCR'S Rs 3 CRORE THANKS

Telangana CM K. Chandrasekhar Rao is bracing for a five-day ayuta maha chandi yagna—a thanksgiving ritual to goddess Durga for granting the wish for a separate state. It would cost up to Rs 3 crore.

WHEN Five days beginning December 23

WHERE 30 acres of land adjacent to KCR's farmhouse at Erravalli, Medak district

INGREDIENTS

50 quintals of ghee made from cow's milk
10 tonnes of firewood

PRIESTS

4,000 priests, 1,500 ritwiks: to chant the Durga saptashati mantras 2,000 times a day for five days.

INVITEES President Pranab Mukherjee, PM Narendra Modi, governors of Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

POLL PLANNING

The Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS), an autonomous body under the sports ministry, will now push the Modi government's schemes in Uttar Pradesh, with a model youth club in Varanasi and a resource centre in Pratapgarh. The location of the centres doesn't seem accidental. The UP assembly polls are just a year away. While Varanasi is PM Modi's parliamentary constituency, the reason behind the resource centre is reportedly NYKS governing council member Dinesh Singh, who is eyeing the Pratapgarh seat.

REBEL RECALL

Slain LTTE leader V. Prabhakaran may have been wanted for his role in the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, but not quite so in Tamil Nadu. On November 26, the MDMK, steered by Vaiko in Tamil Nadu, celebrated the 61st birth anniversary of the slain LTTE chief by cutting a cake at the party headquarters in Chennai. But that was not all. A series of celebrations and blood donation camps were conducted by his party as well as other organisations supporting the Tamil cause in Sri Lanka and the LTTE in the state.



JAISON G





FAMILY POLITICS

Former PM H.D. Deve Gowda is increasingly turning to his older son H.D. Revanna for running the Janata Dal (Secular) in Karnataka. The senior Gowda's angst stems from the fact that his younger son and president of the party's Karnataka unit, H.D. Kumaraswamy, seems less interested in strengthening the party and more busy in establishing his son Nikhil Gowda as a film actor. Last week, Revanna, on behalf of Gowda, authorised party leaders to initiate discussions with the Congress to stitch up an alliance for the coming legislative council polls. This brought him in a confrontation with Kumaraswamy, who disapproved the move.

TRAVEL ADVISORY

Chinese citizens travelling to India are now greeted by an automated text message from their foreign ministry on arrival, listing the 'dos and don'ts' of visiting India. The message tells them to "be civilised" and "respect Indian religious practices", but also warns women to "avoid going out alone at night". Interestingly, it carries a severe warning against purchasing ivory and rosewood, for which demand has recently soared in the thriving Chinese black market.

FREE FOR ALL

by Saurabh Singh



CLIMATE CHANGE



PTM Narendra Modi's invite to Congress President Sonia Gandhi for Chai per Charcha was not the starting point of a new-found cooperation between the government and the opposition before the winter session of Parliament. The first reach out to the Opposition was made to set India's agenda for the climate change talks. Just after the Bihar results, the government started looking for ways to engage with the Opposition. Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar carried the government's message not just to the Congress but even to smaller parties. The strategy has worked well and the government has successfully rallied the Opposition behind its agenda for the Paris summit.



NO TO MILITARY TOURISM

A 25-member team comprising Indian navy personnel was not allowed to go abroad to witness the November 27 trials of a long-range missile system. The Long-Range-Surface-to-Air Missile (LR-SAM) project jointly developed by India and Israel saw its maiden launch from an Israeli warship in the Mediterranean Sea. A dozen top officials were already in Israel for the test even as DRDO officials cited a resource crunch to keep the larger delegation from travelling. The naval personnel had to settle for watching the test live via satellite link in Hyderabad.

PLAYING THE NRI CARD

UPP CM Akhilesh Yadav is wooing NRIs hailing from Uttar Pradesh before the 2017 assembly polls. His government is going to organise its first 'NRI Day' on January 4 next year. It has also come up with unique NRI cards, available for Rs 500, which would allow NRIs to take up their problems with government departments with ease. More than 400 applicants have applied for the card to the state's NRI department. The cards will be disbursed after their passports are verified and despatched over email with a unique ID code.



with ANSHUMAN TIWARI, SANTOSH KUMAR, AMARNATH K. MENON,
KAUSHIK DEKA, ARAVIND GOWDA, ANANTH KRISHNAN AND ASHISH MISRA

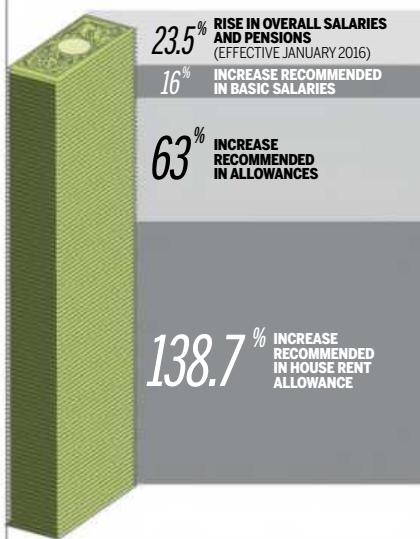


HOW WILL BABUS' PAY AFFECT YOU?

A look at the impact of the 7th Pay Commission recommendations on the economy



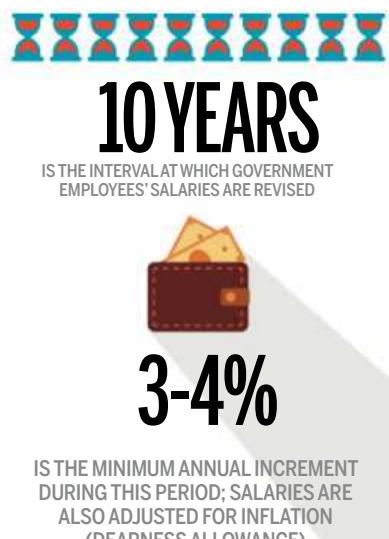
PAY HIKE



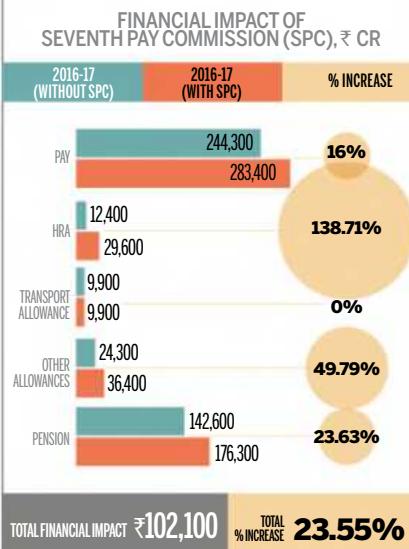
THE BENEFICIARIES



THE NEED



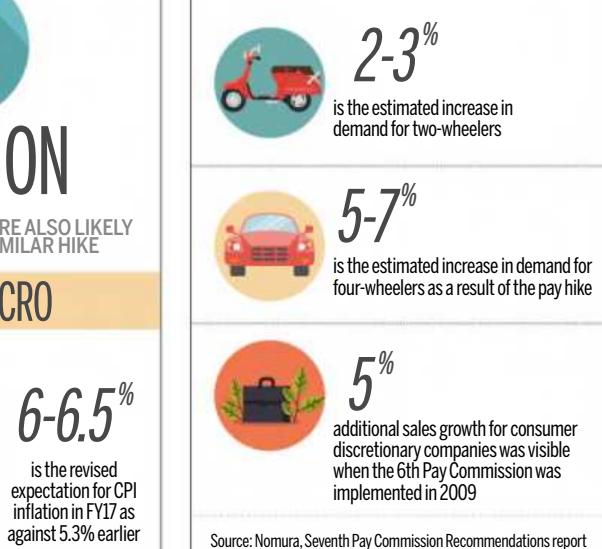
IMPACT: GOVT FINANCES



IMPACT: STATES



IMPACT: CONSUMER DEMAND



Source: Nomura, Seventh Pay Commission Recommendations report



CLIMATE CHANGE PARIS 2015

WHY THE WORLD CAN'T SAVE THE EARTH

THE PLANET FACES DOOMSDAY WITH NATIONS FALLING FAR SHORT OF COMMITMENTS TO CUT CARBON EMISSIONS AND COOL GLOBAL TEMPERATURES AT THE CLIMATE CHANGE SUMMIT IN PARIS

Conférence sur les Changements Climatiques 2015

COP21/CMP11



Paris, France



WORLD LEADERS ON THE OPENING DAY
OF THE WORLD CLIMATE CHANGE
CONFERENCE 2015 AT LE BOURGET, PARIS

REUTERS

| By Raj Chengappa in Paris |

*Rock, stone, dust is this earth;
this earth is supported, held together,
To this golden-breasted earth I have rendered obeisance
What, O earth, I dig out of thee,
quickly shall that grow again
may I not, O pure one,
pierce thy vital spot, (and) not thy heart*

- Atharva-Veda, 1500-1000 BC

Some 3,000 years later, in Paris, when Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President Francois Hollande jointly released a book titled *Ecology of Our Worlds* at the Climate Change Summit on November 30, the two leaders must have appreciated the wisdom of our forefathers when they read this verse. Hours earlier, at the inauguration of the summit that saw the largest gathering of world leaders, Hollande sounded the alarm saying, "Never have the stakes of an international meeting been so high, since what is at stake is the future of the planet, the future of life itself."

In Paris, leaders were confronted with the Unthinkable Truth. There is little doubt that human beings, as a collective, have ignored the warning of the ancients and pierced the very heart of the earth through over-exploitation of its resources. The effects of an overheated globe are already being felt across the world as the earth's climate shows signs of catastrophic and irreversible change. Freak and extreme weather strikes with metronomic regularity causing devastating cyclones, tidal waves, blizzards and droughts. Already the past 14 years have seen global temperatures rise to the hottest the world has recorded, and 2015 was the hottest year ever. Modi urged the gathering,

"We want the world to act with urgency. We want a comprehensive, equitable and durable agreement in Paris, which must lead us to restore the balance between humanity and nature and between what we have inherited and what we will leave behind."

The time for action was now—leaders had to seize the moment. Rarely have so many people placed their trust in the hands of so few. Sadly, they would fail us. Paris, which marked the 21st round of climate change negotiations, saw no great departure from the past—the combatants and the zero-sum games. There was the global South vs North. Warmists vs Denialists. Conservatives vs Progressives. There were many who continued to believe that Green was the new Red. There was Big Government vs Big Corporation. Giant Green vs Gigantic Business. Band-Aid vs Drastic Surgery. There were the NIMBYs (not in my back yard) vs POOLs (please on our land). And it was soon clear that Trade would trump the Planet, as it did in the past.

The imperatives were there at the outset. Experts at the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, a scientific body tasked to study climate change, had deduced that the tipping point for irreversible climate change was if global temperatures were to rise by more than 2 degrees Celsius in the coming years. Greenhouse gases (GHG) in the atmosphere have been rising sharply since the unbridled exploitation of fossil fuels such as coal and petroleum for industrialisation in the past 150 years. The rise in temperatures has seen the polar ice caps, the world's climate regulators, melt rapidly, leading to a dangerous rise in ocean levels and upsetting weather patterns.

The Paris Climate Change Summit was to be the turning point. Nations, particularly developed ones, had to come



CLIMATE CHANGE PARIS 2015

up with commitments to reduce their carbon footprints. But as the summit got underway and torrents of commitments to cut emissions poured in, it was clear that these were not going to be enough to reverse the tide. The UN Climate Change Secretariat estimated that all the pledges of nations put together in Paris are capable of limiting the rise of global temperatures to only about a 2.7 degrees Celsius rise—way above the danger mark. Some experts say it may even rise by 3.6 degrees Celsius.

Worse, even if all the nations implemented their plans, they would use up three-quarters of the carbon budget available by 2030. They would then have to commit to even deeper cuts in their GHG emissions in the next 15 years to avoid devastating climate impacts. British Prime Minister David Cameron asked the right question at the summit: “Not what we need to succeed—we all know that—but what we would have to say to our grandchildren if we failed. We would have to say, it was all too difficult. They would reply, what was it that was so difficult when the earth was in peril? When the sea levels were rising in 2015, when crops were failing, when deserts were expanding, what was it that was so difficult?”

So what is it that is so difficult? Why do nations, particularly the prosperous ones, baulk from taking the challenge head-on even as doomsday looms? In climate change, history has a habit of repeating itself. And since we don’t learn from it, we are condemned to repeat it. Twenty-three years after the world first acknowledged the problem at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) became an international treaty, there is not much progress to show.

In 1997, when leaders realised that emission reduction targets were insufficient, they agreed to what is now known as the Kyoto Protocol, that placed legally binding emission reduction targets on developed countries. The onus was on them because the protocol recognised that they were mainly responsible for the current high level of GHG emissions in the atmosphere caused by their past industrial development. Developing nations such as India and China successfully pushed through the “polluters must pay” approach apart from the central principle of “common but differentiated responsibility” for implementing the protocol. But it took several rounds of tortuous negotiations and a complex ratification for it to come into force in 2005.

The protocol laid a stringent target of 5 per cent emission reduction compared to 1990 levels over a five-year period (2008 to 2012) as part of the first commitment. Another commitment period began in 2013 and ends in 2020. Experts admit that the protocol has largely been a failure because the US, the world’s second-largest GHG emitter, pulled out on the pretext that it doesn’t bind developing countries such as India and China to commit to cuts in their emissions. Following the US lead, many developed nations including Canada, Japan and Russia also pulled out whilst others worked to dilute the stringent provisions.

Developed nations then pushed for voluntary and self-regulatory cuts. That move firmed up into a plan for every nation to declare its “Intended Nationally Determined Contributions” or INDCs to reduce its carbon emissions. At the Paris summit, the stringent Kyoto Protocol is to be given a quiet burial by developed

THE EARTH

The countries that gathered at the COP (Conference of the summit in Paris agree that global warming caused by green threat. However, when it comes to agreeing on five key issues,

THE ASK

To provide adequate green funds to help mitigate and adapt to the consequences of climate change.

THE BATTLE

Developing countries want developed nations to provide adequate green funds to help them mitigate and adapt to the consequences of climate change. In Paris, they want the West to shell out far more on the ‘polluters pay’ principle.

Developed countries claim to have set aside \$100 billion annually for this. But an analysis by India showed that much of the funds provided was part of the Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) that the West had been providing and could not be clubbed as an investment in green funds.

#5 CAPACITY BUILDING AND LOSS COMPENSATION

THE ASK

To create a financial mechanism, including insurance, to provide a safety net when disaster strikes because of freak weather patterns.

THE BATTLE

Developing countries insist that developed countries help them handle the disastrous consequences of global warming and build capacity for these nations to absorb new green technology. They want richer counterparts to agree on a financial mechanism, including insurance, to provide a safety net.

The developed world has not agreed to the demand.

WARMING UP TO CHANGE

COP21 in Paris was the result of a series of climate change conventions that began two decades ago.

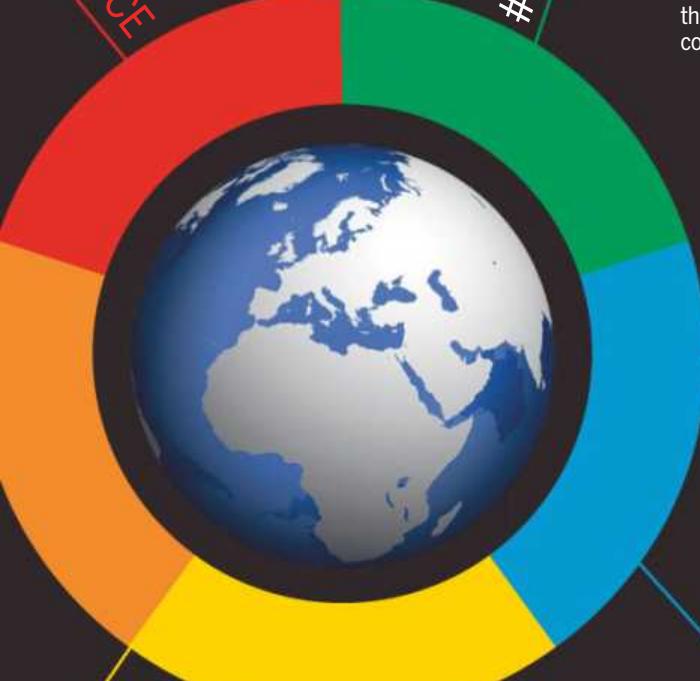
WARS

Parties) 21 climate change house gas emissions is a serious there is blood on the floor.

#1 FINANCE

#2 ADAPTATION

#3 MITIGATION



THE ASK

Getting poorer countries to cope with the fallout of climate change. Rising sea levels caused by global warming have eroded the coastline, forcing countries to build bulwarks over vast stretches to protect populations.

THE BATTLE

Developing countries want the West to provide them funds to adapt to calamities of rising global temperatures that have catastrophic consequences for a swathe of nations such as India which estimates a \$200 billion annual spend on adaptation measures up to 2030.

Developed countries are refusing to make a firm commitment and promise an announcement by the end of the Paris negotiations. Developing countries are sceptical.

THE ASK

Global temperature should not rise by more than 2 degrees Celsius this century. To do that, under the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, developed countries had to commit to legally binding cuts in their carbon emissions. With the US and other developed nations refusing to ratify the protocol, the effort has been a dismal failure.

THE BATTLE

196 member nations pledged voluntary reductions called Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) but when added up these would result in a 3.5 degrees Celsius rise in global temperature, which is way beyond the tipping point.

DEVELOPING India says developed countries must vacate more carbon space as developing countries have millions of poor who are deprived of energy.

DEVELOPED COUNTRIES Insist that developing countries should also take up more ambitious commitments and are trying to dilute the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities enshrined in the 1992 climate change convention. The game is on to isolate India by calling it obstructionist.

THE ASK

To reduce dependence on fossil fuels by making green power such as solar and wind energy cost-effective and reliable. Existing energy utilisation should be cost-effective and clean.

THE BATTLE

Developing countries want the West to transfer green technology at an affordable cost.

Developed countries say much of the research is in the private sector and therefore comes under the purview of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). Also, cheap transfer of technology would destroy the market efficiency. Developing nations are arguing that IPR issues could be met by paying the developers through the UN's Green Climate Fund and then can be transferred to developing countries at a minimal cost.

RIO DE JANEIRO 1992

1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was a treaty signed by 195 parties who agreed to work together to curb climate change.

KYOTO PROTOCOL 1997

Within two-three years it became apparent that the treaty had serious limitations and so, 192 countries adopted the Kyoto Protocol, the first legally binding instrument on climate change for the developed world.

PARIS 2015

Takes off from the Kyoto Protocol whose first commitment period ended in 2012.



CLIMATE CHANGE PARIS 2015

nations after it expires in 2020 and will be replaced by an agreement with non-binding, voluntary targets with only a weak pledge to do a “stock-taking” review after five years.

Developed nations have steadily reneged on two other major commitments to developing countries that had been agreed under the UNFCCC: to provide adequate finance and transfer technology. These were to help poor countries adapt to climate change and help them leapfrog into using renewable sources supplies such as solar and wind by transferring advanced technology to harness them.

On finance, after much haggling, the developed countries agreed to contribute \$100 billion annually to the UN’s Green Climate Fund (GCF) from 2020 onwards. But India and other developing nations argue that for them to take mitigation and adaptation measures to address climate change would require 10 times the funds that are being provided. Moreover, as Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar points out, “developed countries’ commitment of \$100 billion is obfuscation, double accounting and fudging”, because they have included their existing Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) while the commitment was to provide “new and additional” resources. In Paris, there will be plenty of heartburn as effort will be made to squeeze more out of the developed countries which are unwilling to commit additional finances.

Developed countries have also been parsimonious in transferring advanced green technology to developing nations to enable them to lessen their carbon footprint. The US and other developed countries argue that much of their cutting-edge research on green technology is done in private-sector laboratories and there are Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) issues that they cannot violate. Also, by transferring green technology cheap, they would destroy the market mechanism and dissuade industries from investing in this sector. India has said on IPR issues the royalty can be paid through the GCF coffers and the technology bought could be then subsidised to all developing countries. On this vital demand, again there is unlikely to be a breakthrough.

Meanwhile, developed countries have over the years worked to systematically break the unity of developing countries on climate issues. With China emerging as the world’s largest emitter of GHGs, President Xi Jinping smartly collaborated with US President Barack Obama to announce major commitments to reduce its carbon footprint before Paris. With China in the bag, guns are now focused on India, which is seen as recalcitrant and a game-spoiler by developed countries. India points out that its annual per capita energy consumption is one of the lowest—a third of

MODI'S SURYA NAMASKAR

PM Narendra Modi made a big splash when along with French President Francois Hollande he launched the International Solar Alliance (ISA) at Paris

WHY THE ALLIANCE

- 121 nations, including India, located in or near the tropics with more than 300 sunny days in a year could benefit from cost-effective solar power.
- Most solar-rich countries dependent on agriculture have a large population with no access to electricity.
- The ISA provides a global platform to collaborate on developing solar energy. Covering half the world’s population, it will provide the demand that would push the industry towards developing safe, affordable, equitable and sustainable solar power.

KEY TECHNOLOGIES TO MASTER



1. More efficient solar photovoltaic panels for better absorption of sun’s radiance.



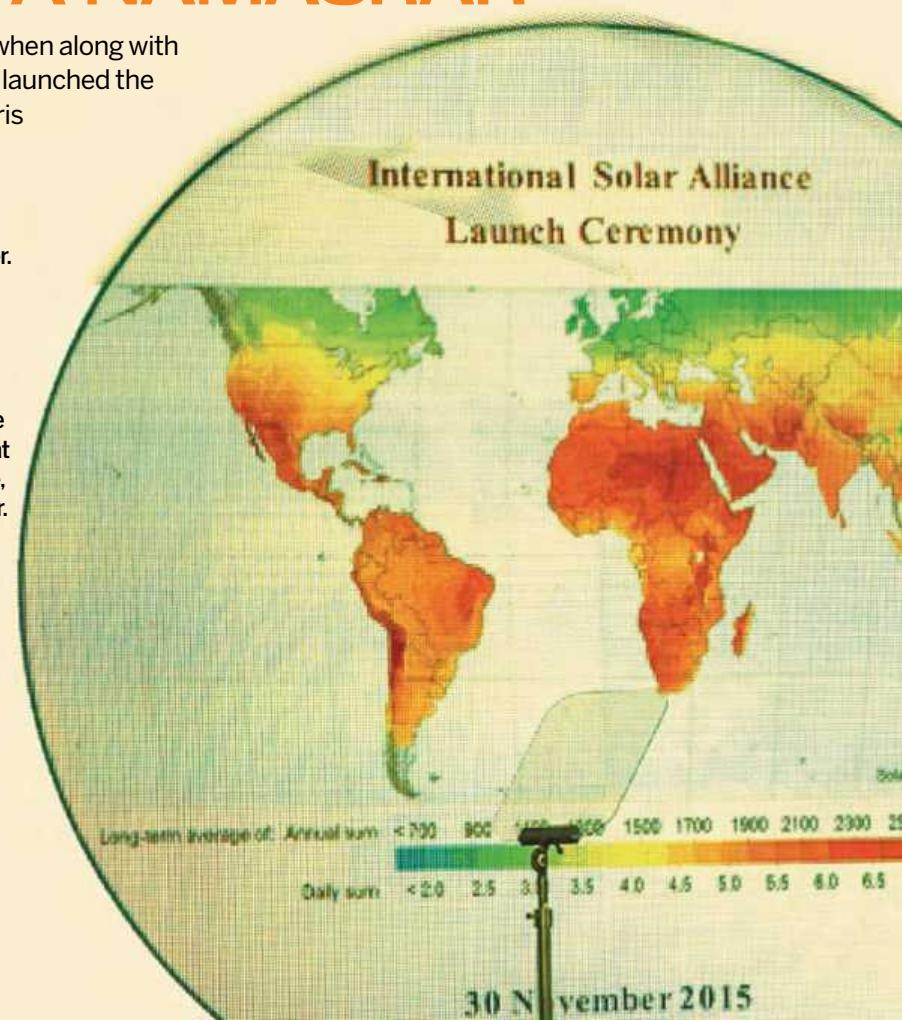
2. Better power storage devices for solar photovoltaic plants and solar thermal plants.



3. Smart grids and green corridors to evacuate power.



4. Make solar power almost as cost-effective as coal-powered plants.



the world average and 20 times less than the US. And while it may be the world's fourth-largest emitter of GHGs, it contributes only 6 per cent as compared to China's 25 per cent, the US's 13 per cent and Europe's 10 per cent.

The big gorilla is not India but the US. It has steadfastly foot-dragged on commitments. Obama admitted as much when he said: "I come here as the leader of the world's biggest economy and second-biggest emitter to say that America not only acknowledges its role in climate change but embraces doing something about it." But US commitments are treated with scorn and scepticism. Delhi-based think tank Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) pointed out in a report sarcastically titled 'Captain America' that Obama's announcement that by 2025 the US would reduce its GHG emissions to 26-28 per cent below 2005 levels was a fudge. In reality, this was much lower than its earlier commitments and represented a 13 per cent cut on a 1990 baseline.

The US and the rest of the world have been attacking India's stance and expressed concern that its INDCs have made it clear that it will increase its carbon footprint. Secretary of State John Kerry termed India as "a challenge". A smarting Javadekar narrates how at lunch at a recent sustainable development summit in New York the delegates were served dishes put together using waste food like 'Landfill Salad' and 'Spent Grain Bread'. But Kerry was served a special chicken

dish. Javadekar pulled Kerry's leg but he continued to tuck into his meal. Using the incident as an analogy, Javadekar remarks, "The US expects us to take on commitments while it does not commit to anything major despite being responsible for much of the world's GHG emissions."

In Paris, Modi smartly turned the tables on the West by announcing the formation of an International Solar Alliance of 121 countries that are located between the tropics and have abundant sunshine (see graphic). The ambitious alliance would provide the requisite demand and economies of scale to drive the price of solar technology down and make it competitive with coal-fired thermal plants. When he presented India's INDCs to the summit, Modi committed that by 2030, 40 per cent of its installed electric power capacity would come from non-fossil-based energy resources. He demanded that the West vacate carbon space it occupies for developing countries such as India as thermal power plants are still the cheapest way to generate electricity. Terming it "climate justice", he said such plants were needed to supply 300 million people, or a fourth of India's population, who still have no access to a reliable source of energy.

So what will the outcome be at Paris? All the four key pillars—mitigation, adaptation, finance and technology—that a win-win agreement could stand on are weak. With Kerry clear that the US would not agree to a legally binding protocol like Kyoto, the Paris agreement will be feeble and infirm. On providing finance and technology, developed countries will stick to their miserly stand. Watching the whittling away of commitments in Paris, CSE Deputy Director General Chandra Bhushan predicts, "Currently, it's a zero-sum game. We will be back in five years negotiating another protocol." Such band-aid efforts would only push the world faster towards disaster. As Prince Charles, who spoke at the summit, said: "We don't have a Plan B to save the earth."

Away from the Le Bourget airfield, where the summit was being held in modified hangars, Paris was still in mourning after the recent terror attacks. The fear had not abated and the country was in a state of emergency. Protesters who were a norm for such climate change events were confined to the picturesque Place de la République and were not allowed to spill onto the streets. It was apparent that the world was facing two of its greatest challenges—growing terror and rapid climate change. As Hollande put it: "I can't separate the fight with terrorism and the fight against global warming. These are two big global challenges we have to face up to, because we have to leave our children more than a world free of terror, we also owe them a planet protected from catastrophes."

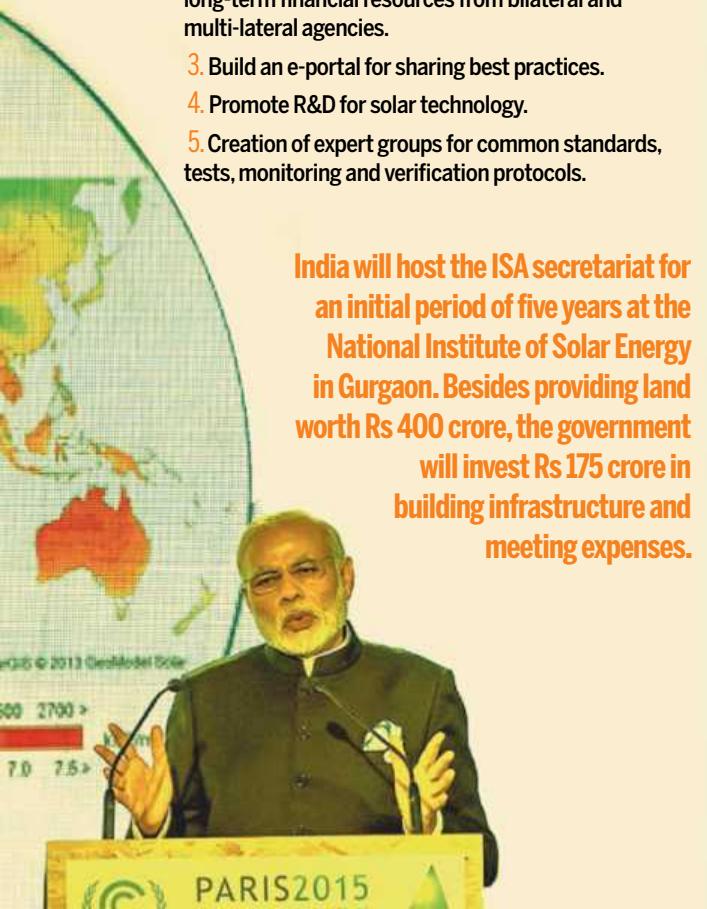
Neither of these twin threats is being handled with any degree of comfort. Asked about the outcome of the Paris summit, Ashok Lavasa, Union environment secretary, and India's chief negotiator at the summit, prefers to quote from a Matthew Arnold poem:

*Wandering between two worlds, one dead,
The other powerless to be born,
With nowhere yet to rest my head,
Like these, on earth I wait forlorn.
Their faith, my tears, the world deride.*

MAJOR FOCUS AREAS

1. Promote solar technology and investment with the aim to help poor communities in member countries.
2. Reduce the cost of capital through low-cost, long-term financial resources from bilateral and multi-lateral agencies.
3. Build an e-portal for sharing best practices.
4. Promote R&D for solar technology.
5. Creation of expert groups for common standards, tests, monitoring and verification protocols.

India will host the ISA secretariat for an initial period of five years at the National Institute of Solar Energy in Gurgaon. Besides providing land worth Rs 400 crore, the government will invest Rs 175 crore in building infrastructure and meeting expenses.





WHIZ-BANG TECH FOR

HOW CUTTING-EDGE BREAKTHROUGHS COULD PROVIDE SUCCOUR BY OFF

By Raj Chengappa

When he flew in to attend the Paris Climate Change Summit, Union Power and Renewable Energy Minister Piyush Goyal had glad tidings to convey. India had achieved a unique milestone in lighting for homes. By November, 3 crore energy saving LED (light-emitting diode) bulbs had been distributed under the Narendra Modi government's flagship Domestic Efficient Lighting Programme.

Goyal pointed out that while it took 549 days to distribute the first 1 crore bulbs, it took less than 72 days for the second and a mere 37 days for the third. The price of LED bulbs had also dropped from Rs 310 per unit in 2014 to less than Rs 73 a year-and-a-half later. Goyal hopes to push prices down by half in the coming days. The plan is to replace all 77 crore incandescent bulbs sold annually in India with the more energy efficient LED bulbs that would reduce the load on power plants by more than 20,000 MW and help consumers save Rs 40,000 crore annually.

Until recently, CFL (compact fluorescent lamp) was the rage but besides its high cost there are environmental concerns about its disposal. Major breakthroughs in

LED technology have helped in improving its luminosity and durability, enabling manufacturers to enter the lucrative domestic lighting sector and compete with CFLs. With economies of scale growing rapidly, companies are investing heavily on research to make LED bulbs suitable for both commercial and domestic use.

In Paris, developing countries—with India leading the pack—point out that if developed countries want them to cut down on their carbon footprint, the only way possible is through the transfer of green technology which is clean, cost-effective and durable. “Technology is the womb of the future,” says Ashok Lavasa, the affable environment ministry secretary. “The world’s tomorrow depends on how rapidly we can improve energy efficiency across the board while utilising clean sources of power.” India is pushing developed countries to transfer critical green technology at a reasonable cost so that poor countries can leapfrog faster into a post-carbon industrialised world.

With an array of solar panels on its roof, the ministry’s headquarters in Delhi generates more power than it consumes daily. It also is designed to provide efficient cooling and heating apart from windows that provide adequate lighting throughout the day to save electricity. Elsewhere,

SOLAR PANELS AT
AAKARA BHATTA IN
SIROHI DISTRICT
OF RAJASTHAN



A GREEN TOMORROW

ERING AN ALTERNATIVE PATH TO CLEANER ENERGY AND LOWER EMISSIONS

Kochi airport is the world's first airport to be fully run on solar power. Lavasa points out that for renewable energy sources such as solar and wind the key issues are efficiency of power generation and storage apart from management of the grid for easy evacuation of electricity. While India has launched major missions to develop solar and wind technology, barring a few, these are far from cutting-edge. It does need to collaborate with developed nations doing research on the subject.

In solar power, for instance, if the cost of electricity generation has to be competitive with that of coal-fired thermal plants, then there have to be major breakthroughs in the absorption capacity of photovoltaic cells. As important is the ability to store the power generated. Currently, lead acid batteries used for storing power are bulky and inefficient. There is research in the US and Europe to see if lithium batteries, the type mobile phones use, could be utilised to store power but for that costs of manufacturing would have to be brought down considerably.

In wind power, most turbines made in Europe are suitable for icy temperatures and high-speed winds that are common there. India requires these turbines to function optimally in hot conditions and operate at much lower wind

speeds. There again collaborative efforts would be a big help for developing countries located in the tropics. Also, to evacuate power, both wind and solar power require smart grids and green corridors that depend heavily on high technology to make them distribute power effectively and minimise fluctuations.

Even in fossil fuel thermal power plants, India is pushing hard to upgrade all of them to become highly efficient in heat utilisation by using ultra-advanced, super-critical technology. In the transport sector, the other major carbon fuel guzzler, a host of car manufacturers are working on cutting down the costs of installing hybrid motors. In public transport, there is a need for a modal shift towards mass transit such as metro rail apart from using railways to move freight.

"India wants to emerge as a leader in clean technology," says Ajay Mathur, director general, Bureau of Energy Efficiency. It's a tough ask. In the following pages we highlight 10 critical technologies that will make a difference to the world's efforts to reduce its carbon footprint. India has got off to a good start on many of these technologies but it must run a lot faster to catch up.

Follow the writer on Twitter @rajchengappa



CLIMATE CHANGE TECHNOLOGIES



- The 'Intelligrid' initiative in the US in the '90s was a starting point for smart grids but was considered too expensive. Post 2013, smart grid initiatives were revived with research labs and technology firms funding pilot projects.
- Saves power, improves efficiency and prevents wastage.
- Tracks in real time where power is going and helps re-route it.
- Smart meters transmit data regularly, giving information about the "health" of a system.



Why

- In India, smart grids will be the key enabling infrastructure for initiatives such as 24x7 power supply to all citizens, 100 smart cities, 175 GW renewable energy and 6.7 million electric vehicles.



Cost

- The Indian government has allotted 14 smart grid pilot projects to state-owned distribution utilities with the cost varying between \$2 million for 2,000 customers and \$15 million for 40,000 customers.



Challenge

- A price-sensitive technology so there will be reluctance from consumers to pay more for this grid.
- Training and capacity building are a challenge in some countries, including India.

① Smart Grid

A MAP TO SAVE POWER



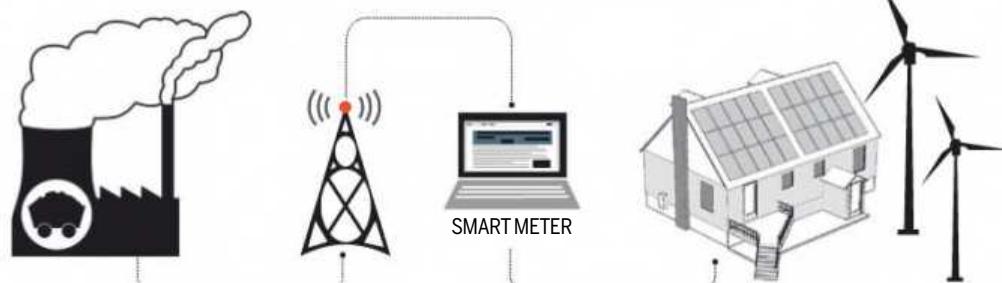
At a time when countries are rallying to keep the global temperature rise below 2 degrees, the focus is now on energy conservation. Smart grids are playing a key role in saving energy, particularly in the US and Europe. It is an electrical map of sorts that uses computer-based remote control and automation to deliver power to people, using innovative technology. It also helps overhaul outdated equipment and, in the long run, lowers energy costs.

The current electrical system in India is archaic. A smart grid can change the way electricity is distributed and consumed and will help people use electricity more efficiently through the use of smart meters, smart appliances and renewable energy sources. According to Reji Kumar Pillai, president, India Smart Grid Forum, "India may not have a smart grid but the extra-high voltage grid that Power Grid Corporation and its subsidiary POSOCO is managing is a very intelligent grid comparable to the best transmission systems in the world. On the distribution side, some private discoms are experimenting with advanced solutions such as smart metering, demand response and energy storage."

—Prachi Bhuchar

INDIA'S ANNUAL POWER DISTRIBUTION LOSSES ARE PEGGED AT **\$50 BILLION**.

HOW IT WORKS

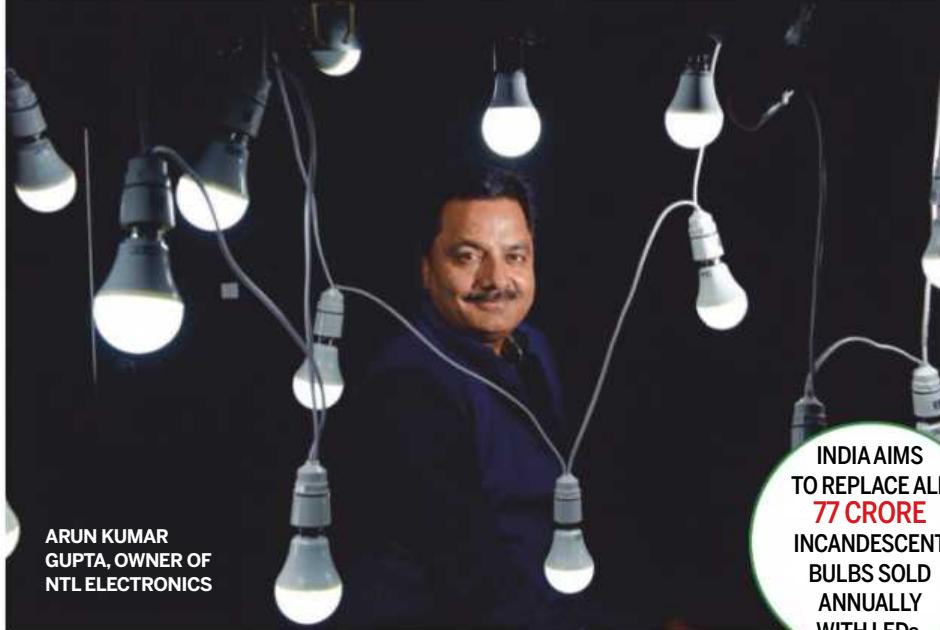


Smart grids use smart meters, which monitor distribution and consumption to keep the system healthy.

LED Revolution

THE BIG SWITCH

CHANDRADEEP KUMAR



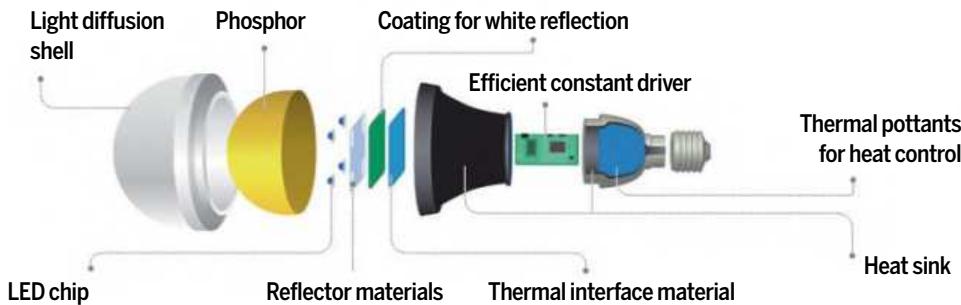
INDIA AIMS
TO REPLACE ALL
77 CRORE
INCANDESCENT
BULBS SOLD
ANNUALLY
WITH LEDs.

LED lights, or light-emitting diodes, are semiconductor devices that produce visible light when electric current passes through them. They have been around for years—lighting digital clocks, computer screens and traffic signals—but were not seen as a traditional source of light until Netherlands-based Lemnis Lighting became the first company in the world to commercially manufacture LED bulbs in 2006. Most developed countries such as the US and Britain have made a big switch to LED bulbs. According to the US Department of Energy, “Widespread use of LED lighting has the greatest potential impact on energy savings in the US. By 2027, use of LEDs could save about 348 terawatt hours (compared to no-LED use) of electricity: This is the equivalent annual electrical output of 44 large electric power plants (1,000 megawatts each), and a total savings of more than \$30 billion.”

In India, the first LED bulb was manufactured by NTL Electronics in 2009 based on the technology from Lemnis. In 2014, NLT acquired Lemnis and is one of the largest manufacturers of LED bulbs in the world. More than a dozen companies are also indigenously manufacturing LED bulbs in India today. This move is supported by the Centre. The aim is to replace all 77 crore incandescent bulbs sold in India with LEDs.

—Kaushik Deka

HOW IT WORKS



LEDs are efficient sources of artificial light. An 8-watt LED bulb can replace a 60-watt incandescent bulb or a 15-watt CFL.



Why

- They produce less heat and contain no mercury.
- LEDs last as much as 20 times longer than other lighting sources. This reduces impact of manufacturing, packaging and shipping.
- LEDs don't need maintenance for at least a decade. Less servicing also reduces their environmental impact.
- They could prevent a cumulative total of 16 billion tonnes of carbon from being added to the atmosphere over the next 25 years.



Cost

- In India, the manufacturing cost of an LED bulb has now come down to under Rs 100. Bulbs can also be procured in some places for Rs 73 now, down from Rs 310 last February.



Challenge

- Although the manufacturing cost is falling sharply, they are still more expensive than other traditional bulbs and CFLs.
- Because they are electronic products, they add to the growing problem of e-waste.



CLIMATE CHANGE TECHNOLOGIES

DANESH JASSAWALA



Energy efficient air conditioners use the greenest refrigerants in the world, which have zero ozone depletion potential, and save huge amount of electricity.



Why

- Energy efficient air conditioners save power both by using refrigerants that will cause faster cooling and by using electrical systems that are more efficient.
- The power savings can be up to 20 per cent compared to other air conditioners.
- The US Energy Department's Emerging Technologies Program is working on developing ACs using non-vapour compression technology, which is estimated to reduce energy consumption by 50 per cent.



Cost

- Energy efficient air conditioners are available in the range of Rs 25,000 to Rs 40,000 for a 1.5 ton device.



Challenge

- People aren't willing to pay a premium for green technology unless there is a clear monetary benefit.
- Green air conditioners require robust control mechanisms and special handling.



KAMAL NANDI, BUSINESS HEAD AND EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, GODREJ APPLIANCES

30% OF POWER IN HOUSEHOLDS ACROSS THE DEVELOPED WORLD IS CONSUMED BY ACs.

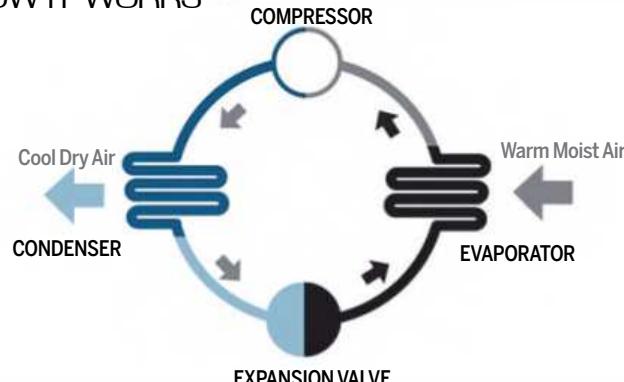
③ Energy Efficient Air Conditioners PLAYING IT COOL

One of the biggest challenges in reducing global power consumption is the use of ACs, which consume up to 30 per cent of power in households in the developed world. ACs consume a lot of power because they involve repeated cycles of compressing gas to a liquid. With rising concerns over ozone depletion, countries across the globe have moved towards environment-friendly refrigerants. Initially, chlorofluorocarbons were used as a refrigerant, but their production was stopped in the US in 1995. Now, nearly all air conditioning systems employ halogenated chlorofluorocarbons as a refrigerant, but they too are being gradually phased out to be replaced by ozone-safe hydrofluorocarbons or even ammonia.

In India, the stage for energy efficient appliances was set by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) in 2010 when it introduced a star rating system for appliances. Companies such as Godrej came up with the breakthrough Green Balance technology, which uses the world's greenest refrigerant, R290, a technology which it developed in collaboration with Germany's Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety. However, energy experts say that while the BEE has set the tone to improve the energy efficiency quest of companies, it is still not comparable with global standards.

— M.G. Arun

HOW IT WORKS



Energy-efficient air-conditioners use refrigerants such as ozone-safe hydrofluorocarbons or even ammonia.

4 Biodiesel

THE GEN-NEXT FUEL

Biofuel was discovered even before the discovery of fossil fuels, but with the exploration of fossil fuel such as oil, gas and coal, the production and use of biofuel suffered a great deal. Rudolf Diesel, the inventor of diesel engine, was the first to test vegetable oil as fuel for his engine in 1893. With the emergence of petroleum derived liquid fuels for different types of engine throughout the 20th century, vegetable oil derived fuels got less attention until the second oil crisis in 1973. That's when the scientific community realised the need for renewable liquid fuels.

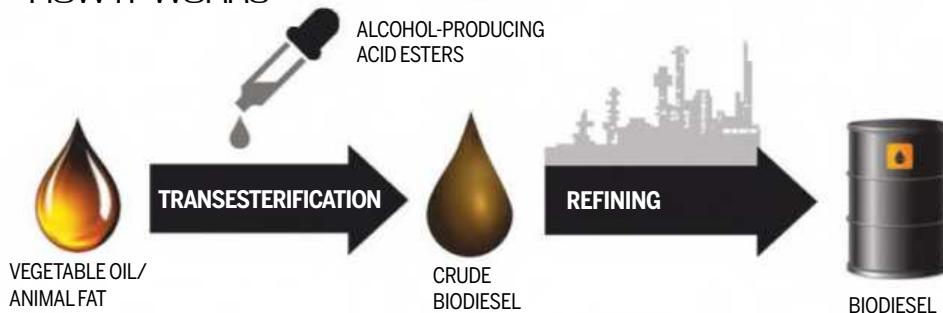
In India, there are more than a dozen companies producing biodiesel. In August this year the government launched its biodiesel programme to cut energy imports and carbon emissions. As part of the initial run, the biodiesel B5 blend (5 per cent biodiesel, 95 per cent petroleum diesel) will be sold to customers in retail outlets of state-owned oil marketing companies in New Delhi, Visakhapatnam, Haldia and Vijayawada. The petroleum ministry has permitted direct sale of biodiesel B100 (pure biodiesel) to bulk consumers such as railways, shipping and state road transport corporations.

—Kaushik Deka

YOGENDER KUMAR YADAV, DIRECTOR GENERAL, SARDAR SWARAN SINGH NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF BIOENERGY



HOW IT WORKS



Biodiesel shows similar fuel consumption rates as conventional petroleum diesel fuel. In fact, it has the highest "energy balance" of any transportation fuel. For every unit of fossil energy it takes to make biodiesel, 3.2 units of energy are gained, making it one of the most efficient alternative fuels.



Why

- A US Department of Energy study has found that bio-diesel production and use, in comparison to petroleum diesel, produces 78.5 per cent less CO₂ emissions

- The ozone-forming potential of the hydrocarbon emissions of pure biodiesel is nearly 50 per cent less than that of petroleum fuel.



Cost

- Biodiesel cost in India is around Rs 35 per litre. However, considering the motivation factor for farmers and high production cost of non-edible oilseed, it may go up to Rs 45.



Challenge

- Technology and innovation is required to reduce the cost of biodiesel using advanced catalytic systems.
- Increasing demands for energy, standardising the capital cost, commercially-viable production facilities are some more challenges.



CLIMATE CHANGE TECHNOLOGIES



A hybrid car uses a minimum of two different types of power, such as a regular petrol/diesel engine with an electric motor. These eco-friendly vehicles are more fuel-efficient and emit less carbon dioxide.



Why

- The transport sector uses 30 per cent of total oil consumed in India. Hybrid cars enhance fuel efficiency by 30 per cent.
- These cars also reduce greenhouse gas emissions by nearly 30 per cent.
- Hybrid kits enable passenger cars to get converted into hybrids in less than a day.



Cost

- Battery-powered hybrid kits cost anything between Rs 80,000 and Rs 1.5 lakh, depending on the size of car.
- The new Maruti Suzuki CIAZ SHVS (Smart Hybrid Vehicle by Suzuki) is priced at Rs 8.23 lakh, lower than the regular model's Rs 8.32 lakh price tag.



Challenge

- To expand by increasing consumer awareness and better pricing.
- Manufacturers will have to evolve to meet the mandated Bharat Stage 5 standards by 2019.
- Fixing accountability for safety of vehicles retrofitted with hybrid kits remains unresolved.

5 Hybrid Cars

DRIVING SMART



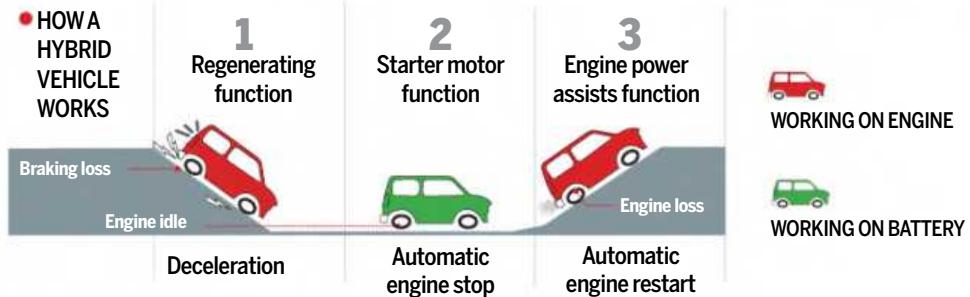
For a country with choked city roads, aggressive driving and painfully slow speeds, hybrid vehicles are the ideal vehicles. Such cars are far more fuel-efficient in countries such as India and China, where clutch-brake-clutch is the default driving mode. The reason is that hybrid cars use regenerative braking, which stores and reuses energy from the parts braked. Recognising the need for innovation in the hybrid vehicle space, in 2013 the government launched a national plan with the goal of getting 6 million to 7 million hybrid and electric vehicles on the road by 2020. With incentives and government regulations in place for a hybrid economy, automakers and engineering companies are devising products that will enable hybridisation. The government offers incentives up to Rs 29,000 for bikes and Rs 1.38 lakh for cars. To keep it simple and affordable, two companies, KPIT Cummins and Bharat Forge, have come together to develop a hybrid kit that can convert an existing vehicle into a hybrid and have patented this technology across the world. Automakers too are starting to launch mild hybrid variants in the same price range as regular models.

—Shweta Punj

INDIA PLANS TO GET A MINIMUM **6 MILLION** HYBRID AND ELECTRIC VEHICLES ON THE ROAD BY 2020.

HOW IT WORKS

• HOW A HYBRID VEHICLE WORKS



6 Advanced Coal-Based Power

COAL CAN BE COOL

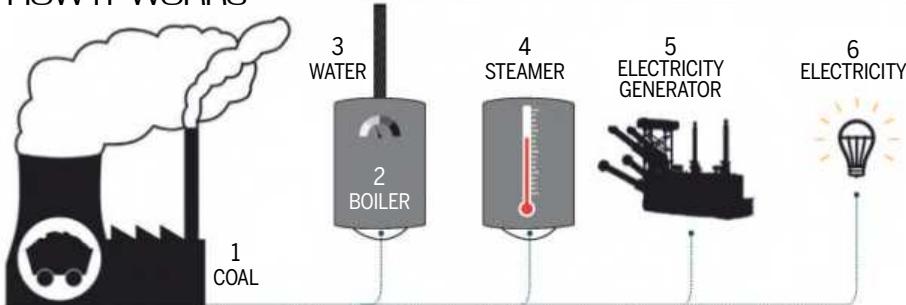


THERE ARE
ABOUT 60 ULTRA
SUPERCritical
UNITS IN OPERATION
ACROSS THE
WORLD.

High efficiency, low emission coal-fired power plants can reduce greenhouse emissions as they increase the amount of energy that can be extracted from a single unit of coal. A one percentage point improvement in efficiency of a conventional pulverised coal combustion plant results in a 2-3 per cent reduction in CO₂ emissions. Several ultra super critical power plants with capacity ranging from 350 MW to 1000 MW are under construction or already in operation. This technology has been driven by countries such as Denmark, Germany and Japan to achieve plant efficiencies and reduce fuel costs. In a more definitive stride towards adoption of clean coal technologies, India is working towards setting up a thermal power plant based on the advanced ultra supercritical technology. The project will be put up by a joint venture of BHEL, NTPC and the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research. The advanced ultra supercritical is a key technology because it burns less coal to derive more energy—the same amount of coal will give about 30-40 per cent more energy through the technology, which applies high heat and high pressure. A 4,000 MW advanced ultra mega power project, built with this technology, is expected to save 4 million tonnes of coal a year.

—Shweta Punj

HOW IT WORKS



The technology burns less coal using high pressure and temperature to derive more energy.



The advanced ultra supercritical technology burns less coal to derive more energy. Through high heat and pressure, it extracts more energy from coal, thus increasing efficiency and reducing per MW CO₂ emissions.



Why

- Energy and power consumption is expected to grow at an average annual rate of 2 to 2.5 per cent between now and 2025, with consumption driven primarily by India and China.
- With this technology, the same amount of coal will give 30-40 per cent more energy with reduced CO₂ emission.
- Coal is a widely available energy source at a stable price and will continue to play a significant role in generating capacity.



Cost

- Rs 3-3.25 per unit.



Challenge

- There is a debate going on around effective utilisation of CO₂ gases. To use it as an energy will add to the project cost.
- It will be tough to keep the technology affordable while tackling CO₂ emissions.



CLIMATE CHANGE TECHNOLOGIES



A wind turbine converts kinetic energy from wind into electrical power. Aerodynamics is key to maximising output from wind turbines. Turbines used in wind farms are usually three-bladed and pointed into the wind by computer-controlled motors.



Why

- It is a clean source of fuel and does not pollute like power plants, which depend on fossil fuels.
- It is a free, sustainable and renewable resource.
- Harnessing wind energy is becoming increasingly cost-effective.



Cost

- Cost of wind power in India is Rs 6 crore to Rs 7 crore per MW.
- The best wind projects in USA deliver electricity for \$0.05 per kWh, says the International Renewable Energy Agency.



Challenge

- To make wind power more reliable and cost-effective.
- In India, availability of grid and land infrastructure at the state level needs to be adequate, for which the government needs to invest and accord reforms.
- Need for a long-term national uniform policy and regulatory framework for both investments and implementation.

7 Wind Turbines

ACTION IN ROTATION

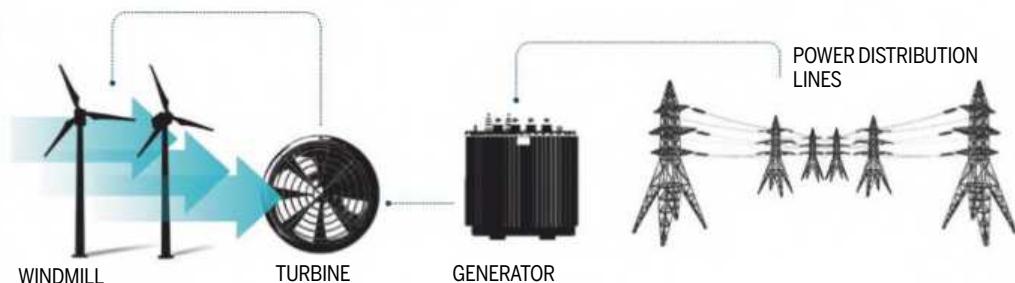
Turbines used in wind farms are usually three-bladed and pointed into the wind by computer-controlled motors. The wind turns the blades, at 10 to 22 revolutions per minute, spinning a shaft, which connects to a generator and makes electricity. Aerodynamics is key to maximising output from wind turbines. Improvements in computational fluid dynamics analysis and the resulting optimisation of rotor speeds and pitch control directly translate into overall increased turbine and wind park production.

Experiments are currently underway to develop more efficient, longer and lighter blades from carbon and fibre, instead of steel and glass, as these are more flexible and have a lower chance of developing cracks. Aerodynamic experts are also working on smaller turbines for more efficiency. In the developed world, research efforts are on to improve reliability of wind turbines, increase capacity and reduce costs. For instance, the US government's Wind Program works with industry partners to increase the performance and reliability of next-generation wind technologies while lowering the cost of wind energy. The program's research efforts have helped to increase the average capacity factor (a measure of power plant productivity) from 22 per cent for wind turbines installed before 1998 to an average of 33 per cent at present.

Pune-based Suzlon Energy Ltd is a leading player in wind turbines in India, and has a global installed portfolio of more than 14 GW across six continents. It brought in new technologies to harness low wind sites, when in November last year, it expanded its capacity at Kutch, Gujarat, wind farm to 1,100 MW. For this, it used the world's tallest hybrid tower, the S97-120 m.

—M.G. Arun

HOW IT WORKS



More efficient materials and lighter blades maximise output from wind turbines, making them viable.



SUZLON ENERGY CMD TULSI TANTI AND THE WIND TURBINE

8 Low Grade Waste Heat Converters

BEST OUT OF WASTE

ORGANIC RANKINE CYCLE IS A BREAKTHROUGH IN TECHNOLOGY, SAYS R.R. SONDE, CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER OF THERMAX



ABHIJIT PATIL

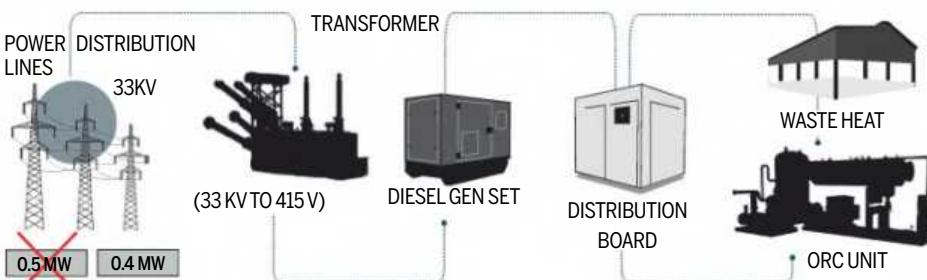


ONCE THE TECHNOLOGY IS IN, THE COST OF POWER GENERATION WILL BE LESS THAN GRID POWER.

Just like garbage can be converted into bio-fuel, waste heat generated from heavy machinery such as boilers, diesel engines and from thermal plants is now being converted into electricity. The organic rankine cycle (ORC) technology harnesses low-grade energy into electricity. In India, Pune-based Thermax has been developing the technology since 2008 and will make it commercially available over the next three to four years. Currently, on a scale of 100 KW, the ORC technology costs nearly Rs 1.4 crore, which when scaled-up would cost Rs 11-12 crore per MW, marginally higher than grid power. However, Thermax claims that as the technology proliferates, the cost will be less than Rs 7 crore per MW over a five-year period, making it cheaper than grid power. Indigenously-developed technology can be 30 per cent cheaper than imported, say experts. Countries such as the US and Israel are successfully using the ORC technology. "Firms in India are still working towards heat recovery at the larger level. Once it's achieved, they will turn to low-grade heat, so the implementation may take longer," says Hyderabad-based energy expert K.S. Venkatagiri.

—M.G. Arun

HOW IT WORKS



Organic rankine cycle technology extracts low-grade energy—such as waste heat—into electricity.



• Organic Rankine Cycle (ORC) technology converts low-grade waste heat energy from all kinds of heavy machinery into electricity.

• In the years to come it can be a vital tool in energy conservation and energy efficiency for industrial and commercial processes.



Why

• Industries consume 63 million tonnes of oil equivalent (MTOE) as fuel, of which 3.6 MTOE (5.7%) can be recovered by ORC.

• ORC can be easily integrated in existing industrial processes without any major modification of the system, and hence is a low-hanging fruit in climate change mitigation technologies.



Cost

• On a scale of 100 KW, imported ORC technology could cost about Rs. 1.8 crore.

• If developed in India, the technology can be 30 per cent cheaper.

• Once the technology proliferates, the cost will come down further.



Challenge

• Lack of awareness about ORC as an attractive alternative.

• Need to have mandatory provisions with appropriate incentives for faster deployment.

• More investment in R&D, especially in the manufacturing sector.



Concentrated solar power technologies use mirrors to focus sunlight and convert it into heat to create steam and drive a turbine to generate power. The technology is expected to meet 25 per cent of global energy needs by 2050.



Why

- Generating power through reflectors and storing it in materials is a reliable and cheaper solution.
- 'India One' in Mount Abu aims to generate power to meet the requirements of 20,000 people.
- It can be replicated as captive power plants for small townships, pharmaceutical units and institutions.



Cost

- For 1 MW storage for 16 hours, the cost of storage will be Rs 40 crore for a life of 20 years.
- The prototype of this 1 MW plant, which in solar energy terms is meant to generate 3.5 MW in 24 hours, costs Rs 80 crore.
- Industrial production can bring down the cost to half.



Challenge

- The manufacturing process needs to be simplified with introduction of a modular design.
- Improving efficiency through better performing dishes, a better storage system, and more efficient turbine.

9 Concentrated Solar Thermal Power

HIGH ON SUNSHINE

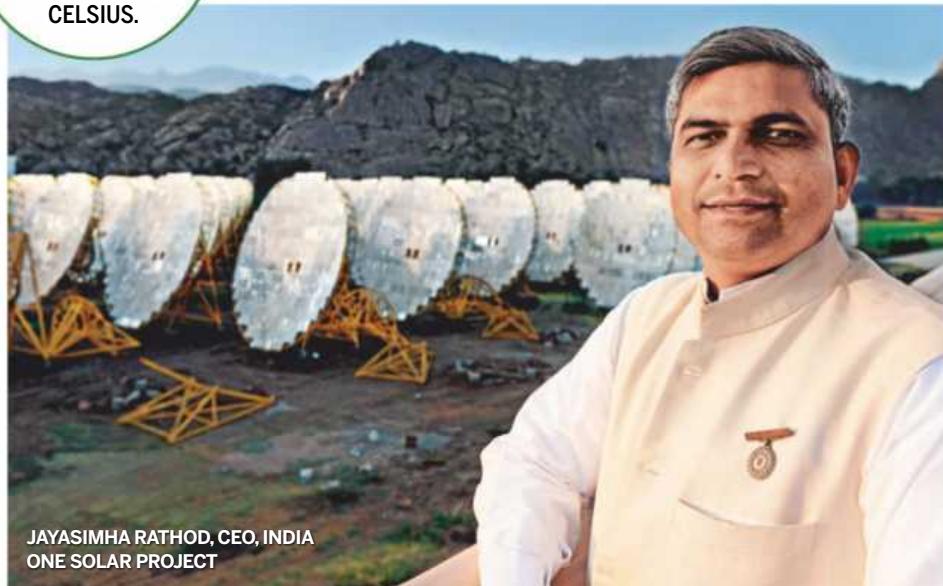
Large-scale solar thermal power generation became a reality in the early 1980s, with Spain and the US emerging as leaders in the field. A study done by Greenpeace International, the European Solar Thermal Electricity Association and the International Energy Agency's SolarPACES group found that concentrated solar power can account for up to 25 per cent of the world's energy needs by 2050, with a drastically reduced generating cost. It is game on now in India. A solar thermal power plant is being built and patented by the World Renewal Trust of Brahma Kumaris on its Abu Road campus in Rajasthan with assistance from the Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy along with German collaboration. Called the 'India One Solar Project', the overall budget for the project has been pegged at approximately 10 million Euros, or more than Rs 80 crore. "This is the only one of its kind dish-cum-cast

iron storage system in the world. It is simple to make in India with indigenous material and manpower," says Jayasimha Rathod, project CEO.

India One, which when commissioned, will have 770 parabolic dishes of 60 m², each covered with 800 pieces of solar-grade mirror sparkling with such intensity that they can burn down grass, wires and tubes, if accidentally focused on them.

—Rohit Parihar

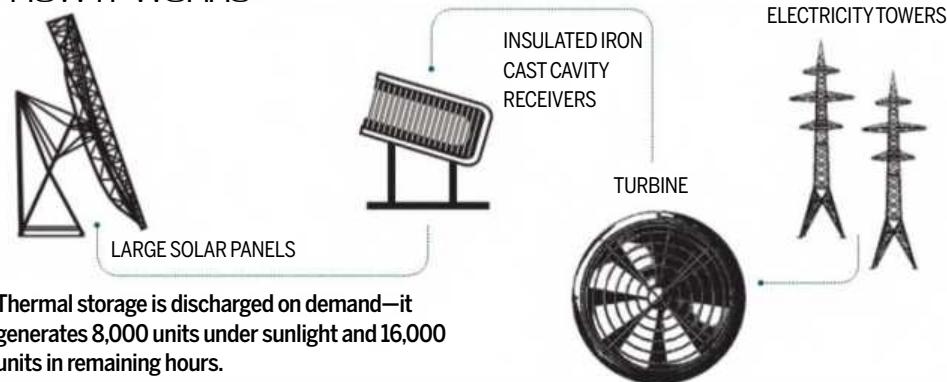
THESE DISHES
CAN GENERATE
TEMPERATURE
OF UP TO 1,200
DEGREES
CELSIUS.



JAYASIMHA RATHOD, CEO, INDIA ONE SOLAR PROJECT

PURUSHOTTAM DIWAKAR

HOW IT WORKS





CLIMATE CHANGE TECHNOLOGIES



- Developed in 2015 by engineers at billionaire philanthropist Manoj Bhargava's laboratory, Free Electric works on the concept of converting mechanical energy into electrical energy.

- One hour of pedalling on the bicycle generates enough electricity to run basic utilities for 24 hours.

- People with no access to electricity can use 25 LED bulbs, charge a cellphone and a tablet every day.



Why

- At least 32,227 villages in India have no electricity and more than 43 per cent use kerosene as a source for lighting. Over 900,000 households have no access to electricity.



Cost

- Each of these hybrid bicycles can be sold for a little over Rs 12,000. "The rich already have electricity and no one invents anything for the poor," says Bhargava, underlining the need for smart yet cheap technology.



Challenge

- Only large-scale production can bring about a visible change. Bhargava wants to produce 100 million stationary bikes.

- It will be tough to distribute the bikes across India to remote places where their need is the most.

10 Bicycle Power

WHEEL OF FORTUNE

The technology to generate electricity from a bicycle wheel has existed for over a century, but strangely, confined only to lighting its head lamp. This simple technology has game-changing applications for human habitations off the grid.

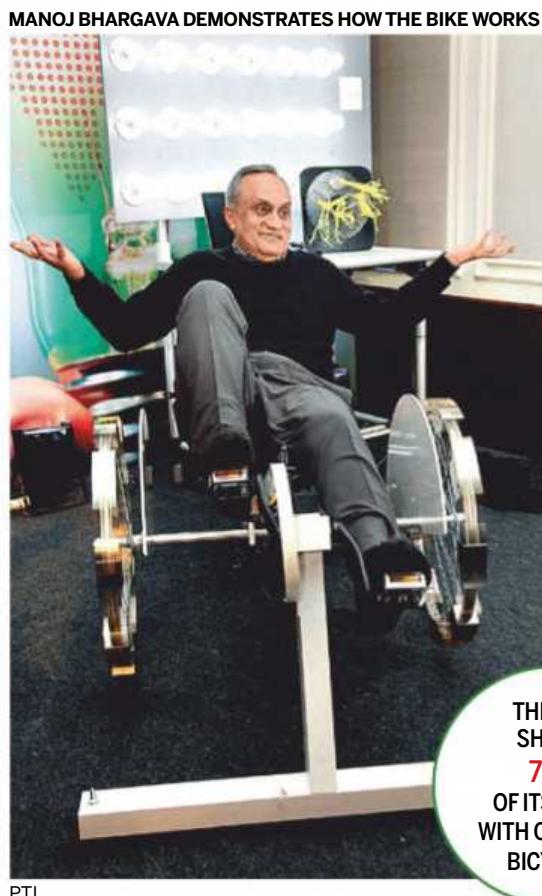
The wheel, it seems, has now turned full circle. This year, a US-based energy-drinks billionaire philanthropist Manoj Bhargava, 62, developed a simple device based on a bicycle to generate and store electricity. Engineers in Bhargava's laboratory in Michigan perfected a bicycle that stores enough electricity to light a home for a day. The user pedals a reclining bicycle hooked on to a flywheel that stores rotational energy. The elec-

tricity generated is stored in a battery which can then power basic electrical appliances. The 'Free Electric' bike was patented by Bhargava, ready for mass production. "This invention is like water," he says, "it is the enabler of everything." The design is simple. The bike shares nearly 70 per cent of its parts—the chains, pedals and gears—with ordinary bicycles allowing for it to be serviced by local cycle mechanics. Bhargava plans to set up the first production facility in India by March 2016, which he hopes can produce up to 1,000 bikes a day.

The potential of a human-powered generator was probably not considered because of a mindset issue, says

G. Raghuram of the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. "Because 'development' is thought to mean minimising human input into electricity generation."

—Sandeep Unnithan



THE BIKE SHARES
70%
OF ITS PARTS
WITH ORDINARY
BICYCLES.

HOW IT WORKS

• FREE ELECTRIC 1 HOUR PEDALLING



THE FEAR FACTOR

Bureaucrats battle disempowered ministers and a host of legislations that place them under constant scrutiny





By Shweta Punj

There is a quiet storm brewing in the idyllic lawns of Lutyens' Delhi. The city of babus is in a churn that was last experienced when Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi ran majority governments. Many in Delhi still remember when Rajiv Gandhi, as prime minister, sacked a bureaucrat at a press conference, and as a senior bureaucrat recalls that during Indira Gandhi's time "bureaucrats were constantly shunted out".

Nearly three decades later the bureaucrats who ostensibly run the country are apprehensive and agitated. Their frustration stems from multiple factors—disempowered ministers, the looming threat of the Prevention of Corruption Act and the Right to Information (RTI) Act, which together, they say, make it virtually impossible for them to move on or implement decisions. Barring a few ministers, primarily finance, defence, road transport and highways and perhaps railways, most ministers tend to defer all key decisions to the Prime Minister's Office, which had about 1,200 files pending until October as against a few hundred normally.

PUSHED TO A CORNER

A different kind of policy paralysis is taking over governance, say bureaucrats. If under the UPA bureaucrats lacked the will and courage to take decisions, now they have the ideas and the capacity but feel constrained by legislations, and aggravated by excessive centralisation of power which has left many feeling disempowered.

The bureaucracy's fear stems from the Narendra Modi government's centralised model of weak ministers and a strong PMO that appoints and transfers officials. "Earlier, under the UPA's empowered ministers bureaucrats had a sense 'that my minister has approved it so I am fine,'" a senior official says. But with the ministerial shield gone, bureaucrats are fumbling. Aggravating factors include pressure to perform and weekend meetings with the PMO. The freedom to function, which comes with empowerment and

protection, is missing. Bureaucrats are not just vetted and selected by the PMO, they are also subject to sudden transfers. The Modi government has reshuffled its bureaucrats three times in the last 18 months. "What disturbs me is the tendency towards inexplicable transfers of officers, even at the joint secretary level," says former cabinet secretary K.M. Chandrasekhar. "This has created an impression that, except for some, other civil servants belong to an underprivileged class and are always under threat," he says, adding that while such instances did occur in the past, they were fewer. Also, this is not conducive for effective teamwork, he says.

A senior bureaucrat with nearly four decades in service explains the prevailing climate in Delhi. "The fear is why should I take a decision. I am being watched, not trusted, let me not meet anybody. Let me protect myself and not take any decision."

"From discovering bugs in Nitin Gadkari's home to news reports of

WHY THE PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION ACT, 1988 SCARES BABUS

If he dishonestly or fraudulently misappropriates or otherwise converts for his own use any property entrusted to him or under his control as a public servant or allows any other person to do so.

If he intentionally enriches himself illicitly during the period of his office and, he or any person on his behalf, is in possession or has, at any time during the period of his office, been in possession for which the public servant cannot satisfactorily account, of pecuniary resources or property disproportionate to his known sources of income.

financial dealings of the home minister's son, the government has given enough signals that you are being watched," the bureaucrat adds.

THE CONTENTIOUS ACT

If there is one act that frightens the bureaucracy, it is the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988. Since 2013, the CBI has gone after several senior bureaucrats including former SEBI chairman C.B. Bhave and former coal secretaries H.C. Gupta and P.C. Parakh.

The act states that a public servant is said to commit the offence of criminal misconduct if he accepts or obtains or agrees to accept or attempts to obtain from any person any gratification for himself or for any other person and has other such provisions that has put the bureaucrats in a bind. The sweeping provisions of the act cover all public servants which also includes political leaders in government offices, including the Prime Minister.

The most contentious provision involves bureaucrats being held responsible if a decision they take benefits a third party. Officials argue that this provision has far-reaching

implications for several ministries including telecom, coal, road transport and highways where decisions involving a third party will be taken and inevitably some will stand to gain. The prospect, therefore, of getting into trouble for an official act has paralysed decision-making.

Key ministries are treading cautiously and are deferring decisions. Recently, the shipping ministry referred a decision to sell a few old vessels to the disinvestment department.

The fear of investigating agencies, still pursuing UPA-era cases, remains. CBI sleuths are often seen at the Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB), probing the role of previous finance minister P. Chidambaram in the Aircel-Maxis deal. The FIPB, an inter-ministerial body responsible for single-window clearance for investment applications, had cleared the controversial Rs 3,500 crore Aircel-Maxis deal in 2006.

"How will FIPB approve anything with the CBI sitting right there," asks a senior bureaucrat. "Officers who take decisions in good faith are being discouraged. Today the act does not look at motive. This act has destroyed the

reputation of honest officers."

The case of former telecom secretary Shyamal Ghosh who lived through three years of hell is a recurring conversation among bureaucrats. Ghosh was implicated by the CBI on charges of criminal conspiracy and under sections of Prevention of Corruption Act. In October this year, a special court trashed the CBI chargesheet, gave Ghosh a clean chit and directed the CBI director to act against his officers. But the damage had been done. "The CBI has destroyed the reputation of one of the best officers," adds another bureaucrat.

Another senior bureaucrat laments the excessive use of discretionary powers. "They have just run riot," he says. The Prevention of Corruption Act, say bureaucrats, is being used as a political tool more than anything else.

The government is aware of the inhibiting provisions of the contentious Act. In April this year, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley echoed the need to revisit the Act, linking the need for the evolution of the Act to the need for quick decision-making in countries where economic activity is being expanded.



DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD

The Prevention of Corruption Act has evolved over the years. An amendment is due since the past one year

1988	1999	2007	2008	2011	2013	2014
Act is enacted. Covers taking a bribe and criminal misconduct, and mandates prior government sanction to prosecute a public official.	The Law Commission of India recommends that a separate bill related to forfeiture of property of corrupt officials be introduced.	Administrative Reforms Commission recommends the Act be amended to include giving bribe as an offence, limit prior sanction for prosecution and provide for attachment of property of public officials accused of corruption.	The amendment bill includes provisions related to extending prior sanction for prosecution to former public officials and the attachment of property of corrupt public officials. The bill lapsed.	India ratifies UN Convention against corruption that covers giving and taking bribes, makes possession of disproportionate assets by a public servant an offence. It agrees to bring domestic laws in line with the convention.	Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Bill introduced in Parliament in August 2013. Extends requirement of prior sanction for prosecution to former public officials, includes attachment and forfeiture of property.	The standing committee examining the bill submits report, recommends widening the description of bribe, enhanced punishment, protection of honest public servants. Amended bill pending in Parliament for a year.

AMENDMENTS TO THE ACT

- The Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Bill, 2013 amends the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988.
- The bill makes giving bribe a specific offence.
- The provision that protects a bribe-giver from prosecution has been deleted.
- The bill has replaced the definition of criminal misconduct. The intention to acquire assets disproportionate to income also needs to be proved, in addition to possession of such assets.
- In redefining criminal misconduct, the bill does not cover circumstances where a public official uses illegal means, abuses position, disregards public interest and obtains a valuable thing or reward for himself or another person.
- Earlier the guilt of the person was presumed for the offences of taking a bribe, being a habitual offender or abetting an offence. The bill amends this provision to only cover the offence of taking a bribe.

Status

The bill is listed for the winter session of Parliament.

"Can there be decision-making where every decision-maker is always on the defensive, cautious of what may eventually happen if a decision is taken one way? Economic decision-making can also be trial and error... it may also involve an element of risk-taking. Does the 1988 Act adequately distinguish between an act of corruption and an act where a decision-maker makes an honest error? I think that the Act fails that test," Jaitley had said.

The amended version does away with the contentious clauses that implicate an officer for causing a financial advantage to a third party through his/her actions. "As a public servant I want to be able to do my work freely and not get dragged to court. The amended legislation recognises that," says Prianka Rao, senior analyst at PRS Legislative Research.

The amended legislation also comes with a stronger deterrent on corruption with stricter penalties against corrupt public servants.

Passing the amended Act is on the agenda of the winter session of Parliament. The clamour from bureaucrats to pass the Act has been growing, and it seems unlikely that the government would want to appear to go soft on corruption, a key theme of its election campaign against the UPA regime last year.

The government has also gone quiet on the Lokpal bill as there is a concern that it will only place officials under increased scrutiny and increase fear.

PUTTING BRAKES ON GROWTH
The slowdown in decision-making is affecting critical infrastructure ministries. Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari lashed out at bureaucrats during a press conference in October, saying: "There are officials sitting on files and not taking decisions. Those who do not want to work, please take VRS. We need people with positive attitude. Performance audit will be conducted."

These ministries have daunting targets to meet and are crucial to kick-start the economy. The roads ministry, for instance, is struggling to build about 20 km a day against its target of

PRAMOD PUSHKARNA

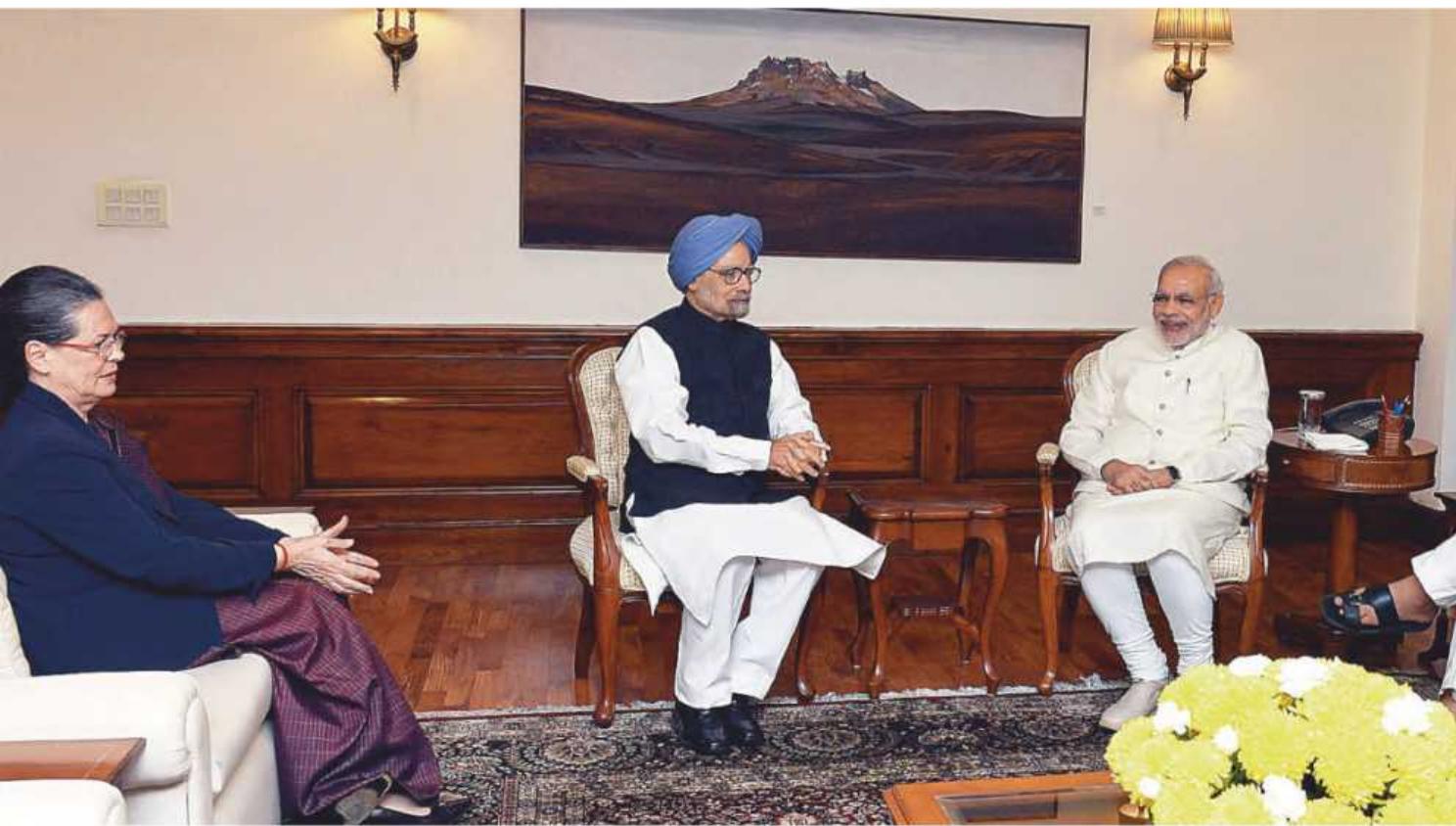


FORMER TELECOM SECRETARY SHYAMAL GHOSH WAS ACQUITTED BY A SPECIAL COURT OF CHARGES OF CRIMINAL CONSPIRACY. IT TRASHED THE CBI CHARGESHEET AND ORDERED THE CBI DIRECTOR TO ACT AGAINST GHOSH'S OFFICERS.

100 km. The ministry wanted powers to take up projects worth up to Rs 1,000 crore or double its present limit without referring such projects to the cabinet. It took the government two months to approve the move. Another crucial decision to compensate the concessionaire in delayed projects by giving additional construction time was also held up for nearly two months. The UPA government with its empowered ministers saw only strategic decisions being referred to the PMO. Ministers are now perceived as 'cagey' and 'inexperienced'.

"Perhaps they (ministers) are also being told to be wary of bureaucrats. *Yeh kisi bhi cheez pe sign karwa lenge*" (They will get you to sign anywhere), says a bureaucrat in a key ministry. A climate of mutual mistrust that does not bode well for governance.

Follow the writer on Twitter @shwetapunj



BJP'S BIG CLIMB DOWN

After the Bihar debacle, the Modi government seems to have realised that reaching out to opposition parties is a better strategy than inviting their non-cooperation in Parliament

By Jyoti Malhotra

As Prime Minister Narendra Modi reaches out to the Opposition in the ongoing winter session of Parliament to pass the Goods and Services Tax (GST) bill, the rest of the government is making sure that it doesn't do anything that will antagonise the opposition and change its mind.

So Finance Minister Arun Jaitley seems all set to open negotiations with the Congress by agreeing to its own proposal of setting up a dispute redressal mechanism—one of three issues Congress President Sonia Gandhi has said the BJP must address

if it wants its unqualified support in passing the GST bill—to be headed by a retired judge, so as to resolve potential disputes between the Centre and states.

Besides Jaitley, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Venkaiah Naidu as well as Commerce Minister Nirmala Sitharaman have been charged with speaking to opposition parties and getting them on board. The government says it will wait for Sonia Gandhi to get back from medical treatment in the US later this week to start negotiations on the GST.

Apart from the dispute redressal mechanism, the Congress also wants the elimination of 1 per cent additional cess as demanded by

large manufacturing states (such as Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Gujarat) as well as capping the GST rate at 18 per cent and mentioning this in the bill itself.

Naidu has been stressing that “give and take” is essential to the spirit of “democracy rather than confrontation”, in taking the GST bill and other issues forward. Jaitley, however, remains wary of stating the 18 per cent GST cap in the bill because several states have been pressing for additional taxes, especially on luxury goods. A dual tax structure in the Centre and states is already on the anvil.

A senior BJP leader admitted, on the condition of anonymity, that in the



CHAI PE CHARCHA: (FROM LEFT) SONIA GANDHI, MANMOHAN SINGH, NARENDRA MODI, ARUN JAITLEY AND VENKAIAH NAIDU

It is this turning over a new leaf that is the centrepiece of a new political strategy in the wake of the BJP's Bihar drubbing that is now the cynosure of all eyes. The Bihar elections are certainly a watershed, giving rise to new abbreviations like BB and AB—Before Bihar and After Bihar—and supplanting the old hubris that accompanied the astounding victory of the Modi-Amit Shah combine in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections.

So the Prime Minister ordered that the BJP sit quietly and listen to the opposition on the intolerance debate in the Lok Sabha without a murmur, and when his turn came to speak, applauded Pandit Nehru's wisdom in acknowledging to Ram Manohar Lohia that he had been wrong on certain counts. Was this an indirect acknowledgement on the part of Modi that he had been wrong too?

Trinamool Congress leader Saugata Roy believes the Bihar election "has definitely sobered up the BJP and brought them down from their high horse. There is a definite change in their approach in talking to the opposition," Roy told INDIA TODAY.

Asked how this was manifesting itself, Roy said Naidu was reaching out to the opposition much more, Jaitley was leaving no stone unturned in pleading the opposition for help in getting the GST bill passed and opposition requests to speak in the House were being treated with consideration. And to top it all, Modi himself hosted Congress chief Sonia Gandhi and his predecessor Manmohan Singh for tea

wake of the Bihar debacle the BJP had realised that it had no alternative but to listen to the opposition and accept its criticism.

A second BJP leader admitted that after Bihar, it was unlikely that the BJP would be winning any other key state elections. In 2016, the Trinamool Congress would likely keep West Bengal and even Assam would be a tough fight, just like Punjab in early 2017. "We have come to terms with the fact that we will not get the numbers in the Rajya Sabha to win a majority, which means that we have to reach out to the opposition until the General Elections are held in 2019," the BJP leader said.

Asked if the Prime Minister's presence in both Houses of Parliament—in the monsoon session, the PM had hardly shown up inside the House—and his replies to the debates on intolerance was a manifestation of this change, the BJP leader said, "You would not be wrong in coming to the conclusion that this change has taken place after the loss in Bihar."

THE BJP HAS BEEN STRESSING THAT GIVE AND TAKE IS ESSENTIAL TO THE SPIRIT OF DEMOCRACY RATHER THAN CONFRONTATION.

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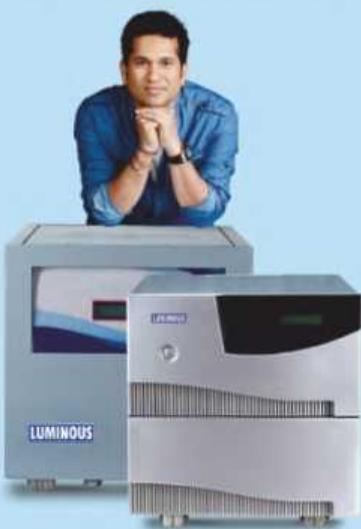
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MEETING A DAY BEFORE THE WINTER
SESSION OF PARLIAMENT IN NEW DELHI**

in an attempt to break the GST logjam.

"The BJP's new strategy is to get the work done and show results. People are asking, where is the work? The government's responsibility is to make sure that the Parliament runs, unlike in the last session which was completely lost. If another session goes by in the same way, the BJP's leadership will be seriously in question," Roy added.

Biju Janata Dal MP Baijayant Panda, who believes that a "certain right-wing fringe has inflamed the situation in the country," says the Prime Minister has been "moving much more towards the Centre. Earlier in Parliament, it is not as if he hasn't spoken out against the fringe, just that he didn't do it immediately."

Privately, BJP leaders are still quietly sniggering that the Congress party's three demands on amending the GST bill were not even present in its own draft, but publicly no one dares say a word against the Congress. Even when Rahul Gandhi chastised Minister of State for External Affairs V.K. Singh's comments likening Dalit children to dogs in the Rajya Sabha, the treasury benches didn't sit up and explode.

Word is, in fact, that an informal fatwa has been issued to BJP leaders to immediately stop displaying the arrogance they have become synonymous with these past 18 months. Hubris is out, humility is in. Even party president Amit Shah has been mostly seen and not heard since the Bihar debacle, except when he told a gathering in Assam recently that the Tarun Gogoi-led Congress government was so willing to appease the Muslim minority that he would soon make Assam a part of Bangladesh.

But the question is, can a tiger change its stripes? Has Narendra Modi seriously come to the conclusion that India is, indeed, much larger than Gujarat as well as much more diverse and therefore has to be



PTI

A NEW PARLIAMENTARY RESPONSE TO THE SHELLACKING IN BIHAR MAY BE THE DOSE OF MEDICINE MODI NEEDS TO REMIND HIM OF HIS PRIME MINISTERIAL DHARMA.

handled differently?

Janata Dal (United) leader Pavan Verma is one of those who believes that "despite the loss in Bihar, it would be a mistake to think that the BJP is becoming a more moderate party. A significant section of the BJP believes that it must fall back even more on its Hindutva plank, which means that it will depend even more on its caste Hindu vote in the coming state elections, thereby polarising the electorate even further."

Verma said the JD(U) will support the GST, like other opposition parties "because that is the sense of the House", but cautioned that the BJP would lose sight of its new-found moderation as soon as the GST bill was passed.

But those who have known him over the years point out that Modi's hunger to rise to the top is so overwhelming that "he will change, to suit the circumstances, but he won't lose sight of his ambition".

According to an analyst, Modi's first speech to the BJP parliamentary

board in the Central Hall of Parliament soon after the BJP came to power in May 2014 was notable for the fact that he paid obeisance to several RSS icons such as Deendayal Upadhyaya. "At the time, he was behaving more like an RSS pracharak, rather than a prime minister," the analyst said.

One year later in Astana, Kazakhstan in July 2015, Modi complimented the "Islamic heritage" of both India and Central Asia as being defined by the highest ideals of Islam —knowledge, piety, compassion and welfare—"which has always rejected the forces of extremism". The Prime Minister was sending a signal to the right-wing fringe in the BJP that it must tone down its harangue, the analyst added.

In retrospect, a new parliamentary response to the shellacking in Bihar may be the dose of medicine Modi needs to remind him of his prime ministerial dharma. Rising from the ashes is a good way to put energy back into a flagging first term in power.

Follow the writer on Twitter @jomalhotra

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- Raghu Rai
- T N Ninan
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- S Nihal Singh
- Raj Chengappa
- Swapan Dasgupta
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- Minaz Merchant
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CENSOR BOARD CHAIRMAN
PAHLAJ NIHALANI

BUTCHER OF BOLLYWOOD

SELF-APPOINTED CUSTODIAN OF INDIA'S CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES, CBFC CHIEF PAHLAJ NIHALANI WAGES WAR ON IMMORALITY AT THE MOVIES. HE'S TAKING HIS NEW ROLE SO SERIOUSLY THAT THE FILM INDUSTRY CAN NO LONGER DISMISS HIM AS A JOKE.

By Suhani Singh with Narinder Saini

Kuttey kaminey main tera khoon pee jaaonga.

Over four decades after Dharmendra first mouthed this line, it remains one of the most iconic dialogues of Hindi cinema. Only, if Dharmendra was to say it now, under current Chairman of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) Pahlaj Nihalani, would go, “Bleep Bleep main tera khoon pee jaaonga”—or even better “Andha kahi ka, main tera khoon pee jaaonga”.

That’s what filmmaker Shantanu Ray discovered when he went to get a certification for his adult comedy, *Guddu Ki Gun*, earlier this year. “Like writers have sounding boards, we now need to have a photo of Nihalani looking down on us and saying, ‘Yeh mat likhiye (do not write this)’,” says Ray. Producer Gaurav Dhingra had to bleep out “lunch”, when a woman uses the word to refer to a man, “lunch toh saamne se aa raha hai”, in *Angry Indian Goddesses*. Kanu Behl, writer-director of *Titli*, was asked to mute or alter the soundtrack in 44 instances. “If my film has been given an A certificate, how does it matter if 30 or 50 per cent of it is full of expletives,” asks a baffled Behl.

The world’s largest film industry and the CBFC have had an acrimonious past. Think of it as a parent-child relationship, in which the domineering father lays down rules and the child thinks they are redundant and that daddy should ease up on the rules with changing times. In Nihalani, 65, producer of Govinda-starring hits such as *Shola Aur Shabnam* and *Aankhen* and duds like *Dil Tera Diwana* and *Bhai-Bhai*, the film industry finds itself tussling with an old-fashioned parent. Nihalani shuttles between Bharat Bhavan, the CBFC headquarters in Mumbai, and his personal, sparsely decorated office in Khar which has no film posters but pictures of deities on his table. Nihalani takes his honorary job so seriously that he often works on weekends. “He thinks he is the moral custodian of India’s culture,” says a board member who has complained about his authoritarian functioning. But Nihalani perhaps thinks of himself as a superhero, who, like Spider-Man, believes that “with great power comes great responsibility”. Only, what he thinks is responsible is seen by filmmakers as restrictive and repressive.

Since his appointment in January, the CBFC seems to be imposing a value system on viewers, taking decisions,

often bewildering, on what’s acceptable and what’s not. More than a certifying body, it now seems to be a #SanskaariBoard out on its own Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.

Less than a year into the job, Nihalani’s hit-list is long and growing (see box). Milap Jhaveri, the director whose film *Mastizaade* was finally cleared after 500 cuts, declined to comment and merely texted with a “Cheers”. But the mood is anything but cheerful for directors, producers and distributors, some of whom chose not to share their experience. Few were amused that they have to confront a board which believes that shortening a kissing scene by 20 seconds, as in the latest James Bond film *Spectre*, is protecting audiences. Given the mood of the nation, some may reason that Nihalani and the CBFC are merely doing their job—being intolerant. Atul

MORE THAN A CERTIFYING BODY, THE CBFC NOW SEEMS TO BE A #SANSKAARIBOARD OUT ON ITS OWN SWACHH BHARAT ABHIYAN.

Sabharwal, director of *Aurangzeb*, was asked to cut a scene in his documentary, *In Their Shoes*, which showed children working in Agra's shoe-leather industry. Reality bites. Do we turn a blind eye to it? "What's next? Will they put a ban on scenes featuring garbage because of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan?" asks Sabharwal.

BOLLYWOOD'S NEW DON

At an event in Delhi on November 23, Aamir Khan highlighted the concerns of the film industry: "None of my films has come up for censorship of late, so I don't have any personal experience. As I understand, the board has been a little aggressive in its approach in the last six to eight months which I think is worrying." Khan should consider himself lucky, for under Nihalani's watch his production *Delhi Belly* wouldn't have made it to cinemas without innumerable beeps or cuts. Bitch, bastard, whore, *saala* and pornographer are just some of the words now forbidden. *Kajarya* director Madhurita Anand thanks her stars that her December 4 release was cleared last year itself, aware that the current board would have given her a tough time about the film on female infanticide in Haryana.

Nihalani's high-handed attitude only highlights that censorship in itself is an archaic concept. "He has no perspective on aesthetics," says filmmaker and former CBFC member Amit Khanna, "which is the cornerstone of any kind of certification policy." In March, when Nihalani was just three months into his job, several filmmakers met the Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore to make their displeasure known.

Attacked for his alleged dictatorial

attitude, arbitrariness in certification and coming up with a list of cuss words, the chairman is unfazed. He says, "I'm working according to the CBFC guidelines and as long as these guidelines don't change, I will persist with the same (see interview)." Sensing the rising furore over the functioning of the current board, Rathore had to intervene and reassure the industry at the recent International Film Festival of India in Goa. "CBFC's main role is certification, not censorship," he said.

REFORM, THE NEED OF THE HOUR

It's a sentiment long and often shared over 64 years, but the organisation has rarely ever succeeded in doing so. The CBFC is a regulatory body which is supposed to certify films with U, U/A, A and, in rare cases, S (Special) ratings dependent on the content. Defending Nihalani, an advisory panel member says he is indeed adhering to the guidelines, which do not permit cuss words. While certifying films, members are to watch out for scenes which degrade women, avoid scenes of violence, cruelty and horror and those that are a threat to the nation among other guidelines. Trouble arises because the last set of guidelines to certify films under the Cinematograph Act, 1952, came in 1991.

"The guidelines are not just outdated but also redundant," says board member and sociologist Nandini Sardesai. "The world has changed dramatically in the last 25 years." "We are working on a new Cinematograph Act," Rathore said in Goa. "A draft [to amend the law] has come from the Justice Mudgal committee. We may put it in the public domain or give it to experts for suggestions."

"In an ideal world, audiences should come to a theatre and decide what they want to watch," says Kabir Khan, director of *Ek Tha Tiger* and *Bajrangi Bhaijaan*. Since we are far away from utopia, most filmmakers, including Khan and Madhur Bhandarkar, acknowledge the need for a regulatory body. Bhandarkar, who has had a longstanding tiff with the CBFC, with *Fashion*, *Heroine* and *Dil Toh Baccha Hai Ji* all being issued 'A' certificates, says: "Parameters are needed and a

RULES OF THE GAME ►

Censor board guidelines for examining a film

1 The certification of films is governed by the Cinematograph Act, 1952, the Cinematograph (Certification) Rules promulgated in 1983 and the Guidelines issued there under from time to time, the latest having been issued on December 6, 1991.

2 The guidelines are issued under Section 5B of the Act, which says that "a film shall not be certified for public exhibition, if, in the opinion of the authority competent to grant the certificate, the film or any part of it is against the interests of the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the States, friendly relations with foreign State, public order, decency or morality or involves defamation or contempt of court or is likely to incite the commission of any offence".

3 The certification rules also apply to foreign films imported into India, dubbed films and video films. It does not apply to films made specifically for Doordarshan.

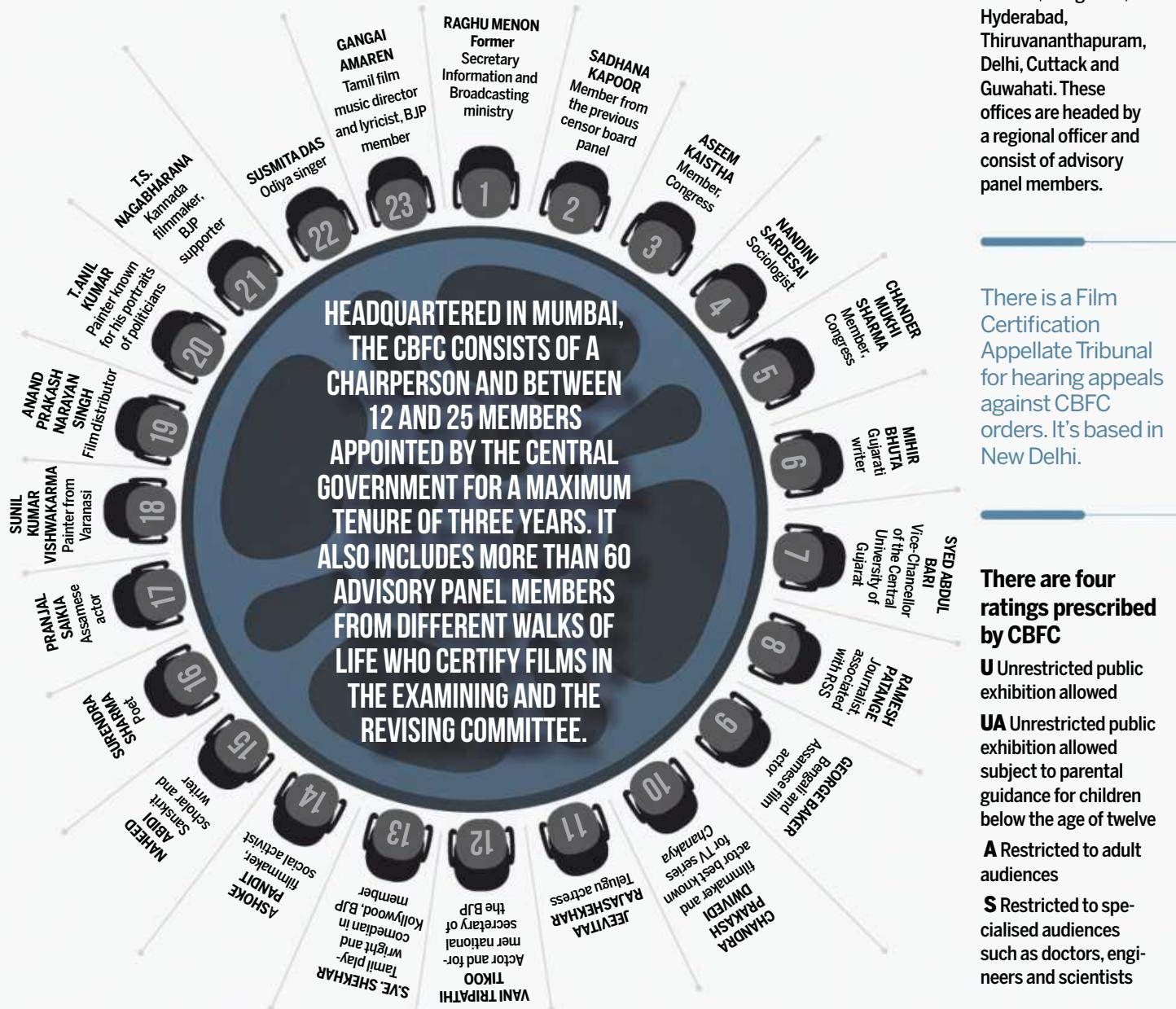
4 While certification is a central subject, the States have to enforce the penal provisions and bring the offenders to book.

DEFENDING NIHALANI, AN ADVISORY PANEL MEMBER SAYS THE CBFC CHIEF IS INDEED ADHERING TO THE GUIDELINES, WHICH DO NOT PERMIT CUSS WORDS.

HOW A FILM IS CERTIFIED

HOW THE CENSOR BOARD WORKS

FOR AN ORGANISATION SO STRUCTURED, THE CENSOR BOARD HAS NEVER STOPPED BEING BLAMED FROM ALL QUARTERS



1 A film is submitted to the regional office concerned. An examining committee (EC) of four advisory panel members, which includes two women, and a regional officer, scrutinise the film and prepare a report, which is sent to the Chairperson and CEO.

2 The chairperson may send the film to the revising committee (RC) which includes a member of the CBFC as presiding officer and nine advisory panel members who haven't seen the film. If the chairperson doesn't agree with the majority view of the

RC, he may constitute a new RC.

3 If the filmmaker doesn't agree with the board's verdict, he or she may appeal in the Film Certification Appellate Tribunal, headed by a retired judge as chairperson and not more than four other members.

IN THE REGIONS

The CBFC has nine regional offices in Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Thiruvananthapuram, Delhi, Cuttack and Guwahati. These offices are headed by a regional officer and consist of advisory panel members.

There is a Film Certification Appellate Tribunal for hearing appeals against CBFC orders. It's based in New Delhi.

There are four ratings prescribed by CBFC

U Unrestricted public exhibition allowed

UA Unrestricted public exhibition allowed subject to parental guidance for children below the age of twelve

A Restricted to adult audiences

S Restricted to specialised audiences such as doctors, engineers and scientists



PRIME CUTS FROM THE BUTCHER'S BLOCK

50 SHADES OF GREY



Following heavy cuts suggested by CBFC, the movie was never released in India. CBFC didn't give a rating even after voluntary cuts by the distributor.

DUM LAGA KE HAISHA

The word *haramkhor* was changed to *kathor*, *harami-pana* to *chhichhori*, *pana*, *ghanto* to *thenga*. The word lesbian was muted.



NH10
Had nine cuts, including words like *randi* and *kutti*, and passed with an 'A' certificate.

MARGARITA WITH A STRAW

Went to the revising committee where it was cleared after only one cut—a sex scene was shortened by eight seconds.



MASAAN

Despite an 'A' rating, the words *saala* and *saali* were muted.



GRAND MASTI

Seeking U/A certificate for TV release meant that 218 cuts were ordered which reduced the 2014 film's duration from 135 minutes to 98.



GUDDU KI GUN

The makers of the sex comedy waited for seven months for a certificate. Cleared after 42 cuts, including removing

Buddha Padri, colloquial Hindi reference for Old Monk, as it may hurt religious sentiments.

SPECTRE

Apart from reducing the length of a kiss, the CBFC recommended replacement of the word 'asshole' with 'idiot' and 'bastard and balls' with 'bighead and cats.'



TAMASHA

Dialogues such as *apna haath jagannath* and *din mein sister, raat mein bistar* had to be deleted.



PREM RATAN DHAN PAYO

Sooraj Barjatya had to delete the word *rakhail* and a Ramleela sequence which was played against two old Hindi songs.



ANGRY INDIAN GODDESSES

After voluntary cuts by filmmaker, 16 additional minutes, which included words like "fucking idiots" and "Indian figure", were asked to be deleted.



BATTLE OF BANARAS

Still waiting for certificate, this political satire according to Nihalani is pro-Kejriwal and its language is unsuitable for public viewing.

UNFREEDOM

The board has issues with the lesbian relationship in the film and the depiction of a Muslim girl getting kidnapped by terrorists. Not released in theatres yet.

MASTIZAADE

After almost 500 cuts, the adult comedy starring Sunny Leone is set for a 2016 release.

INTERVIEW PAHLAJ NIHALANI



Pahlaj Nihalani is the younger brother of Govind Nihalani. While the National Award-winning producer-director made films such as Ardh Satya and

Aakrosh and the acclaimed TV series Tamas, the younger brother produced commercial blockbusters such as Shola Aur Shabnam (1992) and Aankhen (1993) with Govinda. Nihalani, who has taken to speaking of himself in the third person, was in the limelight last year with Har Har Modi, a song lauding Narendra Modi in the run-up to the Lok Sabha elections. With Modi

in power, Nihalani was appointed chairperson of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) on January 19. Assistant Editor Narinder Saini spoke with Nihalani on the tough stance of the CBFC lately and dissent within the board. Excerpts:

Q. The CBFC is in the news for its multiplicity of cuts.

A. We do not have any film pending with us. Certificates have been issued to all films [producers] that have applied till date. All the work is being disposed of in time.

Q. Then why is there so much commotion?

A. All critics have their own

agenda—all this is to malign the government, the CBFC and Pahlaj Nihalani.

Q. Don't you think that the Censor Board has become hyperactive?

A. Wherever there is a wrong word (dialogue), action will be taken. It has always been that way since the formation of CBFC. Earlier, such information would not go out to the people, now everything reaches the public—all internal issues come out. The situation is such that if we do something, it is criticised, if we don't, that too is criticised.

Q. What standards do you follow at the time of censoring a movie?

A. We go by the guidelines. Our effort

certain decorum needs to be maintained. But you also have to see the intent of the filmmaker and context of the film."

One guideline the CBFC also has to consider is that "artistic expression and creative freedom are not unduly curbed". The current environment is such that Bhandarkar feels filmmakers have to resort to self-censorship. "We are living in such sensitive times that people get easily offended," he says. "Then we are told that we don't push the envelope. I'm so frustrated that I think I should make cartoon films." The director faces added pressure from producers, who seek U or U/A certificate given satellite rights are at stake. An A-rated film is certified again for television viewership which means there can be demand for more cuts. It results in cases like *Grand Masti* whose big screen duration was 135 minutes while small screen is 98. Few can fight back. "There is no option but to accept the decision," says Bhandarkar.

OUTRAGE IN PUBLIC DOMAIN

"Something is rotten in the state of CBFC," says a board member. "Nihalani keeps interfering, nitpicking and exceeding his brief." He has been found sitting in on the revising committee screenings, something he is not required to do, given that there



BADLAPUR

The word 'fuck' was muted twice. The film was given an 'A' certificate.



DILLIWALI ZAALEM GIRLFRIEND

Had 63 cuts, including words such as *saala* and *saali*.



BADMASHIYAN

12 cuts, words like *kutta kamina* were replaced with *andha kahi ka*, and *haramkhor* was deleted.

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PART OF AN AGENDA"

is to give the youth what they need according to the prevailing mood.

Q. Every issue becomes a trend on social media these days. Are you bearing the brunt of it?

A. Social media has become a medium which leads to immediate expression of emotions—who you abuse, who you praise. Social media has emerged as a powerful medium of democracy. Nowhere is there more freedom of expression than on social media. There is the outburst, and one can learn from it as well. But one should not feel bad about anything.

Q. Your films too had songs with double meaning.

A. I understand that you are pointing towards a song in the film *Andaz*. I will just say that I have done no wrong. The film was passed by the censor board. I was the producer, and our job was to make the film. The censor board gave it a U/A certificate. I was just a producer. I did not let that song be released. I didn't try to hurt anyone's sentiments. Everyone should do one's job—filmmakers should do theirs, and board its.

Q. What kind of response do you get from the government?

A. I have not been conveyed anything by the government, nor has any information been sought from me ever since I joined.

are enough board members for the job. "There is indirect pressure," says the board member. "How dare members speak up if he is in the room?"

Some board members are so frustrated with Nihalani's authoritarian ways they have taken their feud public. Ashoke Pandit attacked Nihalani's functioning on Twitter, bringing the discontent to the fore. Pandit, who is usually on the side of right-wingers, says, "Freedom must be there. Each person will not produce Ramayana and Mahabharata. Ever since I became a member, I have been involved in the certification of only one or two short films. He has taken all the work in his own hands."

Members such as Raghu Menon, retired IAS officer and former secretary in the Information and Broadcasting Ministry, who has been associated with the working of CBFC for two decades,

are said to have been sidelined. In an email addressed to board members, Nihalani and CEO Anurag Srivastava in November, Menon said he was disturbed by the "cavalier and offhand" fashion with which the board members were treated under Nihalani's reign. "I have never seen such utter insensitivity and disregard by a ministry for an important autonomous statutory body established under an Act of Parliament," he wrote. "...It would be better to disband the board if it is found to be so irrelevant."

Unsurprisingly, Nihalani prefers members who toe his line; the rest are dismissed. Filmmaker Chandraprakash Dwivedi joined the dissenters with a letter in March, "I have started feeling uncomfortable of being part of an esteemed institution where collective decision of the

board is ignored or collective voice is unheard." On July 31 at a board meeting in Hotel Sun-n-Sand in Juhu, a favourite haunt of Bollywood directors of a certain generation, it was declared that the infamous list of cuss words was to be withdrawn. But many filmmakers said the regional offices were still applying the banned list during the certification process. "We were told not to go by media reports," says a filmmaker. "It is very much there."

At the same meeting, Nihalani branded Sardesai "too liberal" for her functioning under Sharmila Tagore and Leela Samson. In September, Sardesai met CEO Srivastava, an IAS officer, in Mumbai and asked him to call a board meeting where all grievances can be aired and important policy decisions discussed. No meeting has been called till now. The CBFC is

FILMS IN THE SLAUGHTERHOUSE

Central Board of Film Certification has always played the class monitor but never with such loving attention to detail

GAMBLER 1971

The board asked the heroine's name Indira be changed given it was the name of then prime minister. It was changed to Chandra.



GARM HAVA 1973

The release of this classic on partition was held up for eight months.

KISSA KURSI KA 1975

Acting Chairman G.S. Thapa felt the political satire was likely to arouse disrespect towards the country and incite people to overthrow the government. It was denied certification and later the film's prints were allegedly burned.

RAM TERI GANGA MAILI 1985

The film created a lot of buzz over a breastfeeding scene but got a 'U' certificate.



PATI PARMESHWAR 1987

Denied rating for depicting a woman in "ignoble servility" of her husband. Bombay High Court allowed its release later.



BANDIT QUEEN 1994

Faced several cuts, pruning nudity and abuses, got an 'A' certificate.



KAMA SUTRA— A TALE OF LOVE 1996



The makers had to delete a two-minute nudity scene, faced opposition from several organisations.



PAANCH 2003

Under the chairmanship of Asha Parekh, this Anurag Kashyap film wasn't released as it was found heavy on sex, drugs and violence.

THE PINK MIRROR 2003

The film, which dealt with the concept of transsexuality, was denied rating for vulgarity

FINAL SOLUTION 2004

Based on Gujarat riots, it was initially held up by the EC but was later cleared by RC.

SINS 2005 The film on the love life of a Catholic priest went through several cuts.

AMU 2005

Based on the anti-Sikh riots of 1984, the censor board cleared it with several cuts and an 'A' certificate. The movie was not eligible for telecast on television.



THE GIRL WITH THE DRAGON TATTOO 2011

Director David Fincher didn't entertain CBFC's cuts for scenes featuring torture and rape. The film wasn't released.

MSG 2015

Censor board examining committee denied rating for fear of fanning communal tension. When it was later cleared by FCAT, Leela Samson and nine others quit.





COLUMN IRA BHASKAR

'WHY BAN ONCE CBFC CERTIFIES?'

It is not the censor board's business to prevent or restrict

It is important to understand the role of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC)—it is to provide a certificate to films rather than to cut them; or, certification, not censorship. The organisation's name also bears it. Our effort was to work that way. India is a land of different cultures and communities, and in such conditions the board should be sensitive to its social responsibilities. Of course, if any film in whole evokes a sense of hatred towards a community then it cannot be allowed in any way. But if there is a scene which is not the viewpoint of the film in total and seems a little off beam, then it should not evoke problems, particularly if such a scene is woven in the film to depict a wrong trend or a wrong attitude. Every film should be seen on the basis of its entire narrative, as the film in its whole is an ideological project.

It is not the CBFC's business to prevent or restrict. And definitely not its business to cut out kissing, sex scenes or other "adult" scenes, especially when a film demands such scenes. If a film has such material, there is the provision for an 'A' certificate, and it must be exercised.

When we were in the Censor Board, we faced similar problems from this same social milieu. But those days the entire board and its chairperson would speak in unison. All of us gave and received opinion on any issue together. This helped us tackle most issues easily and in a logical manner. Take *Ek Thi Daayan* (2013), for instance. Around the time of its release there were protests by many women's groups, who alleged that the film does not portray women in correct light. There was a conflict. But it was a horror film, and we issued the certificate. Similarly, Kamal Haasan's *Vishwaroopam* (2013) was banned by the Tamil Nadu government. Incidentally, if a film gets the censor board's certificate no government—either central or state—can ban it. All this is to say that circumstances were odd in our time as well, but the chairperson and the board remained united. It's not the same today.

The board worked as an autonomous institution those days, too, and most members were in unison. There was consent and coordination among the chairperson, the CEO and the board members. This coordination and consensus has broken down in the board today. Besides, too many voices are being completely ignored.

There will always be disputes, but the CBFC should keep in mind that it does not exist only to ban films. Our society has not been a repressive one, and it is up to the audience to decide what they want to watch. Many organisations and people see themselves as watchdogs or moral police in our country. There should not be a need for any such role. Viewers are sensible, and their likes and dislikes vary with time.

Illustration by SAURABH SINGH



Ira Bhaskar, a professor at JNU, was a CBFC member from 2011 to 2015

supposed to have four board meetings in a year. Under Nihalani, who completes a year in January, only two have occurred. "There is disquiet, but nobody is taking an interest," says Sardesai.

The political is inseparable from the CBFC. The I&B ministry appoints CBFC members for a term of three years and advisory panel members, posted at nine regional offices, for two years. Often, and invariably, it selects individuals who are not opposed to the ruling party, if not in favour of it entirely. There may be a strong case that Nihalani got the job because of "Har Har Modi", but his cohorts can allege that Samson was appointed because she was Priyanka Gandhi's Bharatanatyam teacher. Seen as a BJP loyalist, Anupam Kher was sacked once the Congress-led UPA1 came to power. If Nihalani is under fire, then so was Sharmila Tagore who was accused of being too lenient with *Omkara*, a Vishal Bhardwaj-directed film starring her son Saif Ali Khan.

The board finds itself caught between the diktats and demands of the government and the film industry. In some cases, it has sided with the industry, when films such as *Delhi Belly* and *Grand Masti* were passed. Then there are cases when it makes it apparent that political organisations cannot be displeased, as with *En Dino Muzaffarnagar*, a documentary on the 2013 riots.

Kher, who had a year-long stint during which he cleared controversial films such as Anurag Kashyap's *Black Friday*, Rakesh Sharma's documentary on Gujarat riots, *Final Solution*, and Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*, says, "The more you try to suppress, the more fire it spreads. You need to be mature with the rulebook, which is such that it can be used to ban any film. This is where the chairman's education and awareness about world cinema and literature comes in."

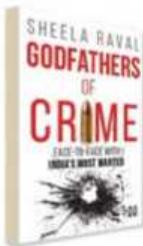
That film certification is here to stay is unquestionable. "We need more ratings," says Kabir Khan, adding that with a wide range of films being made, the current system falls short on options. That may be a solution but it depends on changes within the CBFC which are harder to come by. What we can do for now is have filmmakers find innovative ways to fight the system.

Follow the writers on Twitter @suhani84
and @Narinder75

TRAILING INDIA'S MOST

Sheela Raval trawls through Mumbai underworld's heyday

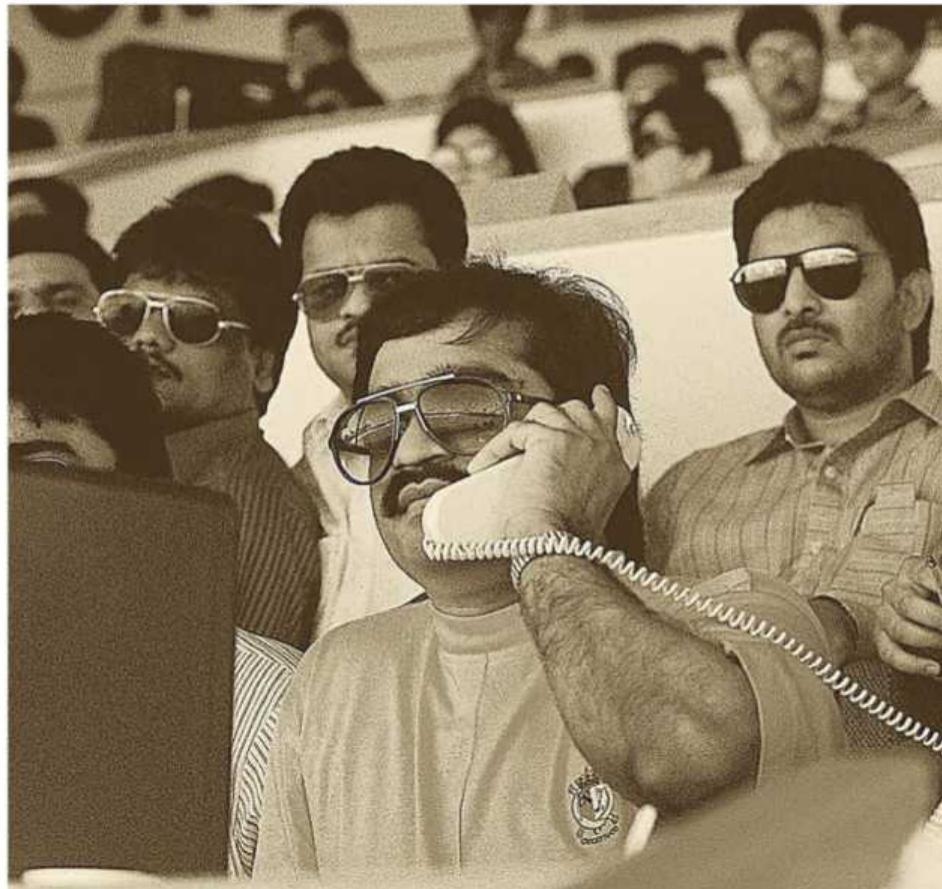
By Sandeep Unnithan



Godfathers of Crime
by Sheela Raval
Hachette India
Pages 304
Price Rs 399

Mumbai's underworld at times seems to mirror the Cosa Nostra, the Italian crime families in the US, but comparisons are facetious. The story of Mumbai's crime world is really about the dizzying descent or, depending on your perspective, the irresistible rise

of Dawood Ibrahim Kaskar in the early 1980s. The son of a Mumbai police constable, Ibrahim violently displaced the older 'gentleman' dons and fashioned a disparate bunch of street hoodlums into India's premier organised crime syndicate. Every other story, including those of 'resident dons' such as Arun Gawli and Ashwin Naik, is a sideshow. Ibrahim is one of the protagonists of Sheela Raval's *Godfathers of Crime*. Raval, a veteran crime reporter who has tracked the Mumbai underworld for decades, is possibly the only one to have met all key 'Godfathers'. She digs into her notes and tapes to unravel the key players and the labyrinthine insides of Ibrahim's corporatised underworld, now a triangle between Mumbai, Dubai and Karachi. The story flits between the high-rises of Dubai, apartments in Bangkok and the chaos of Karachi and tracks upstart dons such as Abu Salem and Chhota Rajan, who violently break away and battle for territory in the 1990s. Raval narrates the story with relish, profiling the dramatis personae including a key figure missing in earlier underworld narratives, Ibrahim's one-time heir apparent, the wily Chhota Shakeel.



BHAWAN SINGH

The Mumbai underworld has fallen from its peak in the 1990s when it terrorised Bollywood and Mumbai-based industry through violent shootouts. The diminished mob now prefers to ride the coat-tails of a globalised Indian economy by investing in legitimate businesses and even its key raconteurs such as Ram Gopal Varma have since moved on to other obsessions. Yet, newer chapters will continue to be added to it, as revealed by the dramatic arrest and transfer from Bali of former Ibrahim lieutenant Chhota Rajan. Ibrahim, a cat's paw of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) for his role in the 1993 Mumbai serial bombings which killed 257 people, is now a specially designated global terrorist and the subject of a bitter diplomatic tussle between India and Pakistan. Fittingly,

his story will mark the finale of the Mumbai underworld saga.

Follow the writer on Twitter @SandeepUnnithan

EXCERPT

ENEMY NUMBER ONE

The Grand Hyatt on Sheikh Rashid Road, Dubai, is a magnificent property that stands out even among the glittering skyscrapers of this oil-rich city. Its Baniyas Grand Ballroom is fittingly opulent—an ideal place to hold a spectacular ceremony. On the evening of July 22, 2005, the huge hall had been decorated in an elegant and classic style, in white, gold and dashes of pink here and there.

I was at this venue to cover the high-profile and closely monitored wedding reception of Dawood's eldest daughter

WANTED



UNDERWORLD DON DAWOOD
IBRAHIM AT A CRICKET MATCH IN
SHARJAH IN OCTOBER 1991

Mahrukh to Junaid, the son of former Pakistani cricketer Javed Miandad. That evening I had come to the *walima* on behalf of Star News (now ABP News), responding to an invitation issued by Miandad to the channel during an interview aired a week earlier. Though there were plenty of other reporters from other channels who wanted to cover the wedding, they had all been turned down. I had not expected Miandad's invitation to be honoured or that I would be allowed inside. But here I was, although getting in had hardly been a cakewalk.

While I waited to be taken on-stage to greet the couple, I scrutinised the hall, watching out for familiar faces and levels of security. It was at this time that I noticed Dawood Ibrahim, the don himself, sitting in an enclosed area.

Till the time I got a glimpse of the don, the only image of him that Indian television channels repeatedly aired was that of Dawood sitting in the gallery of Sharjah's stadium, watching a cricket match, surrounded by his cronies and Bollywood celebrities. He looked a bit different in real life, I thought. Instinctively, I turned to walk towards him, but the two men beside me—Fayaz and Jaber, my escorts at the wedding—immediately sprung into action. They stopped me, saying that he was sitting in an all-male section and I could not go there. I said I just wanted to say hello to Dawood Bhai.

They turned towards the don, and after some sort of communication between the two men and Dawood, Jaber told me he would talk to me later, once the function had ended. It was 1.30 a.m. already, and the event would go on for at least another hour. I would have told him if I could that all I wanted was some visuals that would prove my presence at the *walima* of Dawood Ibrahim's daughter's wedding. I tried again, asking him if I could have my pictures taken or perhaps shoot some footage while I wished the couple. I promised I would not make the images public until I had their permission. But Jaber was unrelenting. He told me, as he had before, that he would ask and let me know.

While we waited, I asked him how they would like me to report about the event. Jaber reminded me that I was the only journalist who had been allowed inside, and then looked at the wall-mounted CCTV camera. I suppose someone from security must have given him further instructions through the Bluetooth device plugged into his left ear, because when he turned back to me he simply said, '*Aap jo theek samjho.* (Do what you think is right.)'

It was a simple yet loaded answer. The million-dollar question for me was: should I go on air and say that Dawood Ibrahim himself was present at the reception, or not? Since morning, all of Indian media, including my channel, had been reporting his absence at the wedding. The venue for the event was closely guarded, but those who had made their way through other nearby ports to Dubai

had started beaming peripheral information quite early on. The don had evidently hoodwinked intelligence agencies across the world and stepped out of the crosshairs of rivals' guns to be present at the *walima*. My sources had informed me earlier that the *nikah* had been solemnised at Mecca on July 20. I had no doubt whatsoever that he had been present there as well.

I looked around to see if I could find any familiar Indian or Pakistani faces. None of the big names from Bollywood or the cricketing world was there except for former Pakistan captain Asif Iqbal. The only thing that linked the *walima* to Bollywood was the popular Hindi film songs that continued to play in the background.

Once the stage was relatively empty, Jaber came down to fetch me. Miandad welcomed me to the stage and introduced me to Junaid and Mahrukh and the other relatives, including (Dawood's wife) Mehjabeen and her other daughter Mahreen. He told them that I had been writing about the D Company for a decade in *India Today* magazine.

Those on the stage greeted me individually and Miandad told me, '*Dekho, bachhe kitne masoom hai. Bas media lagi padi hai label lagane ke liye. Inka kya kasoor? Inko baksh dena chahiye. Professional aur personal life alag rakhi chahiye.* (Look at the children—they are so innocent. What is their fault? It's just the media that always needs a label. They should be spared. Professional and personal lives should be kept separate.) You must respect my family affairs.' He said the two had met while studying in the UK, but Dawood's wife Mehjabeen and his wife were also related, so the families had known each other for a long time. I was then asked to sit between the bride and the groom for a photo session.

After 15 minutes, I was escorted from the stage. I looked around the hall. What I found striking was that the gaiety one associates with weddings was absent here. The non-stop chit-chat among friends and relatives meeting after a long time, the back-slapping and the loud guffaws, the general merriment that accompanies a happy occasion were all missing. ■

THE WILL TO POSSESS

In an erotic nod to Roland Barthes's *A Lover's Discourse*, Rosalyn D'Mello makes a stunning fiction debut. Sex has never flowed with such grace in Indian writing.

By Gayatri Jayaraman



A Handbook for My Lover
by Rosalyn D'Mello
HarperCollins
Pages 244
Price Rs 499

Within the seductive uncurling of her text, two lines circle back anaphorically: "You were supposed to be a one-night stand. A quick fix. A conquest. A ten-line poem in my grand anthology of lovers." Rosalyn D'Mello's *A Handbook For My Lover* is less a work of fiction, using a nod to the structuralism of Roland

Barthes's *A Lover's Discourse*, and more a voyeuristic love letter to a partner, coming after six years and the not-always-easy chiselling of a sexual relationship between a younger woman and a man thirty years her senior. It is filled with a lover's pouting grousing, her churlish entreaties, her gasping orgasms and her one-sided memories of fights and fondness.

As complex and detailed as most relationships are, the work is in fact as visual a documentation of her photographer lover, with as brutal a gaze as Seiichi Furuya's intimate exploration of his wife in the photographic discourse 'Portrait'. This is more so because D'Mello, an art writer and a writer of erotica, brings her entire arsenal of art, light, colour and sensuality to the page. "...you walked into bed as if it were the sea. I dived in too..." she writes, and diagnosing herself with 'cartographic dyslexia', rolling metaphors off her tongue as if she, and you the reader with her, were there in the moment where scenes etch themselves in potent imagery. The language is strident and owned, possessive, like the speech of love



ROSALYN D'MELLO

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itself. Its flaws, if any, are that as she writes on, caught in the moments she has to prove her relationship points with, the lessons of the phase, she forgets to dress it up for the reader the way she does her young love; like a couple that has been together long enough, she allows it to let itself go. Or perhaps this is also the function of the book, to draw the voyeur in to the very intricate folds of a couple, from the precisions of their limbs when they mate to how they puke and sleep, bringing them all to a point where depth is the only option and the surface veneer of how coupledom appears is broken. In the deshabillement, a bareness of writing is achieved.

EXCERPTS

One night, after a petty, meaningless fight, you walked into bed as if it were the sea. I dived in too, but instead of keeping to the other side of the shore as I am prone to do in the aftermath of a hurricane, I swam over and lay beside you. You climbed onto me as if you were shipwrecked and I was the only log of wood in sight for miles.

You were fishing for forgiveness. I had already forgiven you.

You had sprung a leak inside my soul. It was just like you to row me gently and then threaten to have me capsized.

'What the fuck do you see in me anyway?' I said.

'Well, I could ask you the same thing,' was your cocky reply.

You then curled your back against my belly and drew my hand over your chest like the edges of a quilt and fell asleep.

I've spent months mulling over that question. What is it that I see in you? And how different is it from who you really are or seem to be?

I once had a lover who was too callous with everyday things. His bed was always unmade, his room always seemed like a hurricane had thrown up on the floor. His books

Sex has never flowed so unpretentiously and with such grace in Indian writing. With it, D'Mello challenges notions of not only the straight-laced conventions of relationships into which these lovers do not fit by any stretch of definition, neither in cohabitation, nor in age, nor in financial dependence, and ruled by the vagaries of spontaneity, but also notions of woman, taboos of beauty, parading the darkness of her skin like it didn't matter, the very present mess and pain of menstruation, and extending the range of what togetherness must mean. There is within it an alarming devotion to the truth: the discomfort of potential subjection to abuse, the

sharp sting of emotional and physical violence, actively by the father, passively by the lover, and the resultant paralysis of its impact. It is, as she puts it, a work in present tense, a documentation of the ongoing, but it is, eventually, as she documents in her prologue, a striptease in which both partners owe this truth to the relationship. It is as though, in return for the key that never quite comes, and the commitment that is doomed to never quite solidify, and this is a book without an ending, D'Mello has extracted her pound of flesh for contracts never quite signed: absolute nakedness.

Follow the writer on Twitter @Gayatri_J

were always dusty, his clothes were strewn around, and his kitchen sink was always spilling over with dishes. He had a penchant for misplacing things. He was so clumsy with his fingers he once ripped a 500-rupee note accidentally while fishing it out from his wallet to pay the restaurant bill.

He was a writer too, so I forgave him his inadequacies, treated them as quirks, as eccentricities. But I always knew I could never be with him beyond the present tense. It isn't wise to give your heart to a man with butter fingers.

This is not to say I don't see your faults. You have many. I haven't put you on a pedestal. But maybe there's

a case to be made for the way in which you administer varied doses of hope and despair so that at no point can I rest assured about your feelings towards me. You keep me on my toes. You don't care for stability, certainty.

You only know the gospel of flux, of eternal change. You demand the impossible of me. You are my joy and my suffering; my jury, executioner and judge. You insist on pushing me to the edge of the cliff, even nudging me on occasion. You make me falter with my speech. I feel the ground slipping under my feet, and just as I am about to fall off the precipice, you draw out a rope and pull me into the safety net of your embrace. That's the thing—I can never trust you to rescue me, and yet you do. Unfailingly.

I will not be moderate. I want everything from life or nothing at all.

I want everything!

I want my garden of earthly delights with all the seven deadly sins for company.

No, I am not meek or humble, pure in heart or selfless. And I don't want paradise with its happy endings and countless beginnings.

I want a feast of sin and flesh. I want this world, not the next. ■

I COULD NEVER
BE WITH HIM
BEYOND THE
PRESENT TENSE.
IT ISN'T WISE TO
GIVE YOUR HEART
TO A MAN WITH
BUTTER FINGERS.



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Source: Targeting Mantra, November 2015

net fail

Taxi Trouble

Mona Ambegaonkar
The @Uber cab & driver who says janaa hai key nahi when asked how he runs Govt vehicle as cab. Taken rickshaw now! 😊

The @Uber cab & driver who says janaa hai key nahi when asked how he runs Govt vehicle as cab. Taken rickshaw now! 😊

Uber seems to be in a spot again as a government car in Gujarat is moonlighting as a taxi for the app. Mona Ambegaonkar was surprised when a government vehicle arrived as her Uber taxi, spurring her to tweet about it. Uber has apologised but hasn't explained why such a car was in its service.

web win

From Imagine to Emoji

Poet Brian Bilston is reinventing poetry on twitter. One of his most shared pieces is a re-writing of John Lennon's 'Imagine', which goes: 'Emoji there's no language, it's easy if you try. No words to choose from, just an icon which means cry.'



web lol

Slapping Reward

Aamir Khan's comments on India's intolerance have received mixed reactions. While some agree with him, others are not pleased, such as a Shiv Sena leader who is offering Rs 1 lakh to anyone who slaps the actor. Two students of Miami Ad School have created a site that does exactly that. The site, slapaamir.com, that counts the number of slaps and shows Khan in various states of pain is asking people to virtually slap him and collect their reward.



viral video



A video of a woman stealing a vegetable steamer from a child during a Black Friday sale in the US shocked more than 6 million.



More than 2.8 million were moved by a circus mountain lion Mufasa's re-entry into the wild.



A cappella group Pentatonix's performance of the Star Wars theme at the American Music Awards wowed over 1.7 million.

Follow the writer on Twitter @lkummi

what's new

App Alert

Picpal lets you communicate with friends via photo collages.



Silly Snake is an updated version of the old snake game.



THE NEW FACE OF SPIN

How Ashwin went from warming the Team India bench for most of 2014 to becoming the most successful bowler in the world in 2015.

By Vikrant Gupta

The clock had been ticking, and Ravichandran Ashwin was standing at a crossroads, wondering where to go. The year 2014 was winding down. It had been the worst patch of his career, and even as Ashwin sat on the bench for more Tests than he played, doubts lingered both in his mind and around the dressing room: Was he finished already?

A chance encounter with Bruce Yardley, the former Australian off-spinner of the '70s and '80s who got no more than modest returns for his efforts, happened just at the right time before a World Cup match in Perth. Clear your mental cobwebs and go back to basics, was Yardley's message in the 15-odd minutes he spent with the Indian off-spinner in the company of Team India director Ravi Shastri. "He came across as an intelligent



R. ASHWIN DURING THE
3RD TEST AGAINST SOUTH
AFRICA IN NAGPUR

TOP OF THE POPS

Most successful bowlers in 2015

	Match	Wkts	Best	Avg
R Ashwin (Ind)	8	55	7/66	17.81
Stuart Broad (Eng)	13	51	8/15	25.09
Yasir Shah (Pak)	7	49	7/76	23
James Anderson (Eng)	11	46	6/42	22.65
Mitchell Starc (Aus)	11	46	6/111	25.06

cricketer but seemed so confused with all the thinking and experimentation in his bowling," Yardley says. "I told him to get more revolutions on the ball and try landing it off or outside off using his height." It was simple advise but the pieces fell into place straight away. The jigsaw was solved. Ashwin found his mojo, first during the rest of the World Cup, and then in the Tests that followed.

Fifty-five wickets in eight Test matches going into the Delhi game against South Africa at the Feroz Shah Kotla have now made him sit atop the global leaderboard for 2015. He has been menacing, combining the aggression of a boxer with the guile of a snake charmer, and batsman after batsman have been made to look like novices. India have won back-to-back series in Sri Lanka and against South Africa at home, and the duo of captain Virat Kohli and Ashwin are bringing a sense of déjà vu. They are reminding fans of what a young Anil Kumble meant for a youngish Team India under Mohammad Azharuddin in the early '90s, and the question these days is: Can Virat-Ashwin go the same way?

The stories aren't too different even though the leaves on the calendar have turned from 1993 to 2015. Back then, the England series at home had provided succour to both Kumble and Azhar after tough tours abroad. Like at that time, 22 years ago, India have gone back to the same no-water dry pitches and the same three-spinner formula to fashion their victories. And judging by how badly the South Africans have fumbled, it will be a big ask of any visiting side to turn the tables on the hosts in these conditions.

India are set to play as many as 12 home Tests next year, and Ashwin's second coming will surely bring alive the old adage that spinners are like old wine. At 30, a golden period lies ahead for him as statistics involving the spin greats over the last quarter century convey. At the 31-Test cut-off, Ashwin has left the best of the best—Shane Warne, Anil Kumble, Muttiah Muralitharan, Harbhajan Singh and Daniel Vettori—far behind on wickets taken (see graphic).

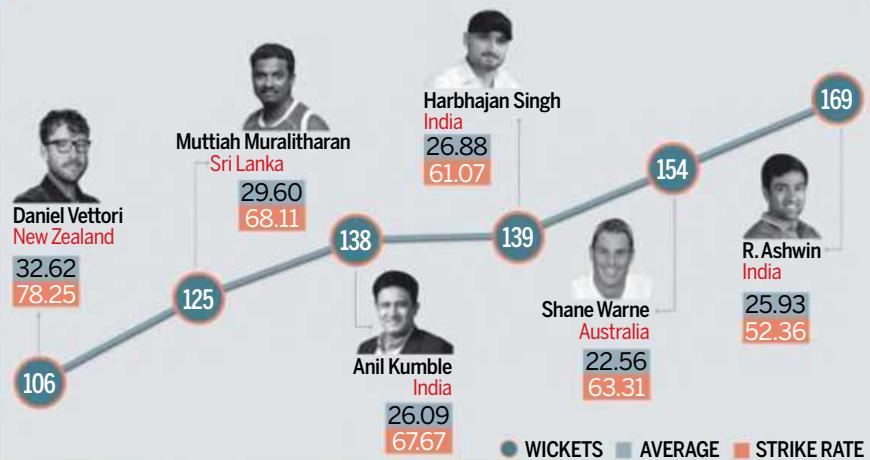
The next challenge will be

VIRAT KOHLI CELEBRATES INDIA'S VICTORY AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA IN THE 3RD TEST MATCH IN NAGPUR



PANKAJ NANGIA

AHEAD OF THE CURVE Performance of top spinners after first 31 Tests





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replicating his form when India travel outside the sub-continent, but with the focus more on home games, his numbers will only swell over the next 12 months. "He has become an off-spinner once again," observes Azharuddin, famous for getting the best out of spinners during his captaincy. "Last year, he was trying to pick wickets with his variations alone. Now he uses those variations more as a shock than a stock strategy. By getting the ball to turn in from outside off he is also getting more bounce. I can see the trust between him and Virat building, so that must be helping him grow as a leader within the team. Ashwin gets more attacking against the best batsman in the opposing team. That's an approach any captain loves, and that makes him the kind of player any captain wants in the team."

I MIXING IT UP

While Ashwin has struggled with the Kookaburra ball overseas, especially in South Africa and Australia where the seam is less pronounced, he has been a master of the SG Test ball used in India. He has used the more upright seam to get the ball to grip and gain bounce on abrasive home pitches, getting numerous bat-pad dismissals. He has also mixed things up, switching from over-the-stumps to around, deceiving batsmen with floaters and getting them to edge to the slips. Not too many South African batsmen have been comfortable using their feet to Ashwin this series, and because he pins them to their crease, they haven't been sure to lunge forward or go back.

A critical factor in India and Ashwin's success is that Kohli has been able to attack from the other end too. Spinners Ravindra Jadeja and Amit Mishra have played their part, suffocating and strangulating batsmen, and helping Ashwin strike by holding up their end of the deal. But Harbhajan Singh, with 417 Test

wickets to his name, gives Ashwin all the credit for turning up the heat on the Proteas. "He is using the crease well, bowling from closer to the stumps, and even though he has been flighting the ball, he is coming onto the batsman just a shade quicker. Confidence does that to a bowler and his strike rate this year (a wicket every 34.25 balls) has been phenomenal," Harbhajan told INDIA TODAY.

Ashwin and his colleagues have covered up for the Indian batting lapses too. While winning the toss was a lucky break in the two Tests in Mohali and Nagpur, the batsmen haven't shown the skill and temperament expected of them. The team hasn't scored 300 yet and there have been only two 50-plus scores by batsmen, prompting some to question the Indian template. Former Test captain Sourav Ganguly, while giving credit to Ashwin and the spinners, and Virat's intent to win at any cost, feels that the quality of pitches takes some of the sheen off India's victories. "Ashwin has been India's big gain this year in Tests. But he would have still

got wickets against these batsmen on slightly better pitches and that would have prepared India for overseas Tests too. This is the team for the future so the bowlers must know what it takes to pick 20 wickets in foreign conditions," he says.

This is akin to the script that played out in the early '90s, when the Azhar-Kumble combination was ruling the roost at home but could not win a single series outside the sub-continent. Although India have attacking batsmen who can succeed in bouncy, alien conditions, picking 20 wickets is now directly proportional to Ashwin's ability to lift his game on foreign frontiers. Only then will he be able to fulfil his early potential. One crossroads has been passed; another lies ahead.

Follow the writer on Twitter @vikrantgupta73

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150 YEARS WITH ALICE IN

A GIRL IN A PINAFORE, A WHITE RABBIT THAT CHECKS TIME ALL THE TIME, A CHESHIRE CAT THAT POPS UP AND MELTS ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST ENDEARING BOOKS, ALICE IN WONDERLAND, PUBLISHED ON NOVEMBER 26, 1865, HAS



An Oxford mathematician, Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, invented the story to entertain the children of a fellow professor during a river outing: of a bored little girl called Alice who goes looking for adventure. The family loved it and at the end of that day, the daughter, 10-year-old Alice Liddell, asked for the story to be written down. Dodgson began writing the next day. It took him two-and-a-half years to complete the book, published by the house of Macmillan under his

pen-name, Lewis Carroll.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Among avid readers were Queen Victoria, who enjoyed the book so much that she asked Lewis Carroll to dedicate his next book to her. Dodgson did that and presented her *An Elementary Treatise on Determinants*.
- Lewis Carroll suffered from a rare neurological disorder that can make the sufferer feel bigger or smaller than they are. The disorder

was discovered and named later Alice in Wonderland Syndrome.

ALICE IN 2016

Those of you who enjoyed Tim Burton's phantasmagorical movie *Alice in Wonderland*, produced by Disney in 2010, wait for the sequel—*Alice Through the Looking Glass*—slated to hit the theatres in May 2016, with Johnny Depp as the mad hatter and Mia Wasikowska as Alice herself.

WONDERLAND

AWAY IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE AND THE MADDEST OF HATTERS.
INSPIRED FASHION, FILMS, BOOKS AND MORE FOR A CENTURY AND A HALF.



FASHION AND ALICE Alice has always been under the fashion spotlight. Check out how:



ALICE HANDBAG
Italian leather-maker Furla's handbags with images from the fairytale, and a rabbit clasp.



ALICE BOOTS & SUNGLASSES
Boots and socks that are ankle length, and Versace's wonderland sunglasses.



ALICE BAND
Has entered the Oxford dictionary as a "flexible band worn by women and girls to hold back the hair".



ALICE DRESS sky blue, with short sleeves and peter pan collar and full, twirling skirts, with white apron. Or the pinafore-pantaloons look.

7 FILMS THAT ARE AMONG THE MOST TALKED ABOUT AT THE GOA FILM FESTIVAL

DEV PATEL

Film *The Man Who Knew Infinity*



On the life and times of mathematics genius Srinivasa Ramanujan—the character played by Patel.

NANDITA DAS

Film *Manto*



She is returning to direction after six years with the life-story of Urdu writer Saadat Hasan Manto. Das has just finished the script. The film will go on floor in 2016.

KANU BEHL

Film *Agra*



The *Titli* director's second film: on love, family, relationships, and self-destructive urges, shot in the city of the Taj Mahal.

AMIT MASURKAR

Film *Newton*



A dark comedy. The adventures of a man who journeys to Naxal-infested Chhattisgarh and discovers what democracy is. It will go on floor by year end.

KAUSHIK GANGULY

Film *Cinemawala*



On a father-son relationship, both of whom share a common passion, films.

GITANJALI RAO

Film *Bombay Rose*



On migration, through the eyes of a 10-year-old deaf and mute boy.

ALANKRITA SHRIVASTAVA

Film *Lipstick under my Burkha*



Starring Konkona Sen, on the secret lives of four women in search of freedom.



SUNNY SUTRA

Sunny Leone will bare it all, this time with words only. After a colourful stint as a porn star, producer of adult entertainment and an actress, Leone will be seen in the new role of an author. The Bollywood actress has been roped in by Juggernaut Books to write "delectable stories about passion and play". Luckily for her and her fans, this will not be edited by the Central Board of Film Certification.



MELODIES FOR A CAUSE

PM Narendra Modi wasn't the only Indian making waves at the climate change summit in Paris. Grammy Award-winning artist Ricky Kej launched his album *Shanti Samsara*, billed as "world music for environmental consciousness", at the summit. Modi presented a copy of it to French President François Hollande.

THE BETTER BITE

Dr Swati Piramal celebrated the launch of the Piramal Art Foundation's public museum, the first private museum in Mumbai, with Les Petits Beurres, Parisienne butter and sea salt cookies topped with three kinds of chocolates. Made at her own health unit, how's that for healthy decadence? Bring on the art, we say!



ACTING CHOPS

Bollywood has delivered limited offerings when it comes to films on food. Rajesh Khanna, Kunal Kapoor and Aditya Roy Kapoor were a few to have donned the chef's hat. Now Saif Ali Khan will wield the knife in the official remake of Hollywood film *Chef*. Hopefully unlike his last few films, this won't cause a bheja fry.



▪ Compiled by **Suhani Singh** Follow the writer on Twitter @suhani84

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THE BIG MOMENT

Comedian Radhika Vaz did India proud at the Gotham Awards, which celebrate the best of independent filmmaking. Vaz, along with Nadia P. Manzoor, won an award for their act as Brooklyn-based Hijab-wearing women in the YouTube comedy series, *Shugs and Fats*. Vaz tweeted: "I am so excited I could pee. Oh wait. I just did."



HOW WAS THE WEEK?



**AWESOME
P.V. Sindhu**

Won her third consecutive Macau Open title.



**RELIEVED
Ranbir Kapoor**

The talented actor won plaudits for his performance in *Tamasha*, which also fared well at the box office.

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KABIR CHADHA
COUNTRY HEAD, COURSERA

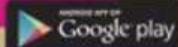
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COVER PHOTOGRAPH RAJWANT RAWAT

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SLAM DUNK

India's first NBA player Satnam Singh Bhamara recounts his journey from obscurity to fame.



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Tom Joseph of Autodesk, US highlights the role of the Maker Movement for innovators.

Read more at www.aspireindiatoday.com

Revisiting Ice Age to reverse effects of global warming



Made of the stuff of dreams of hardcore environmentalists, a research team led by the University of Otago is currently at the world's largest ice shelf to study the effects of global warming. The largely unexplored Ross Ice Shelf in Dunedin is a hub of activity 60 years after its first tracked traverse. The team painstakingly made their way from Scott Base on November 6. The tracked vehicles and snowmobiles carried research equipment including a heavy seismic 'thumper'. Leading the

way, the Hagglund developed by Otago University scientists will be used for acoustic-based imaging of the seafloor and its sediment layers. It picks up crevasses below the ice with radar. The expeditioners are camped out on a constantly-moving layer of ice, 350 metres thick. The urgency arises from the fact that the Ross Ice Shelf is cheek-to-jowl with the West Antarctic Ice Sheet, which is already under threat from the Amundsen Sea region. Following up on ice shelf and ice sheet retreat, the

project aims to understand the actual physical process and the rate of depletion. Team member Dr Christian Ohneiser says, "we will use this reconstruction to test computer models of past change in order to improve models forecasting future change." Joining them are teams from University of New Zealand and Canterbury. Following 10 days of research, the team has started work on a snow airstrip to allow easier access to the site. A National Geographic cameraman will be documenting the awe-inspiring journey.

The goal of the research project is to study the repercussions of triggers on the ice-shelf and the ocean system.

NEW ON THE BLOCK



THE BRICS CHALLENGES RANKINGS

Times Higher Education (THE), BRICS & Emerging Economies Universities Summit has all the ingredients of a game-changer. Partnering the programme is an institute of the O.P. Jindal Global University. Shared development concerns and questions of research excellence predominated. Creating world-class universities through international benchmarks was also discussed.

IMI EXPANDS NUMBER OF COURSES

Adding a few feathers in its cap in one go, the International Management Institute, New Delhi, opened admissions to four new courses. The 15-month course of Executive Postgraduate Diploma in Management is aimed at mid-level managers. It involves a two-week stay in a partner university in US/Europe as course work. Last date for this program is February 12, 2016.

Top culinary minds cook up a storm at Chef Summit

Taking stock of culinary achievements in the country, the Chef Summit hosted by the Indian Culinary Forum at The Ashok, Delhi, is a landmark for the food industry. The fraternity of chefs deliberated on promotion and representation of Indian cuisine, branding on social media and slow food. Hospitality industry aspirants abounded at the session on Culinary Education Inspiring as a Profession. The panelists, including Vir Sanghvi and Chef Sabyasachi Gorai emphasised on starting small and making the most of social media to make a breakthrough.



We plan to incorporate culinary culture in the tourism marketing strategy. It will commence from next year.

**Vinod Zutshi,
Secretary-Tourism,
Government of India**



To maintain Indian food traditions, we need to adhere to and respect the science involved in preparation and presentation.

**Hemant Oberoi, Former
Grand Executive Chef at
Taj Palace**



It is our responsibility to patronise authentic food culture and to motivate chefs to be innovative and creative.

**Davinder Kumar, ICF
President and Execu-
tive Chef, Le Meridien**



GLOBAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUMMIT IN IIT KHARAGPUR The Global Entrepreneurship Summit at IIT Kharagpur is an annual event of significance. Guest speakers included Kanwal Rekhi from Inventus Capital, Sundar Pichai, Mahesh Murthy from Seed Fund among others. Scintillating exchanges on entrepreneurship set the mood, from co-founder ethics and elevator pitch to an innovation exhibition.

Discussing the future at the President's home



ACADEMICIANS WITH PRIME MINISTER MODI, PRANAB MUKHERJEE AND SMRITI IRANI

Innovation and technology in higher education is the need of the hour. On the country's immediate agenda on the education front is targeting progress and being at par with global institutions of repute. The first-ever Visitor's Conference, 2015 held at Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi, stressed upon the need to improve the quality of higher education in our institutions, to focus upon capacity development of faculty and to promote gender equity and cultural inclusion through higher education. The three-day event saw participation of leading industry members, academicians and heads of central universities from IITs, NITs and IISc Bangalore, among others. A vigorous session of brainstorming later, they came up with a blueprint to transform the way we acquire knowledge. Nobel Peace Laureate Shri Kailash Satyarthi, Prof. CNR Rao and Prof. MS Swaminathan were in attendance. The conference also witnessed the signing of 44 MoUs between industry and academia and release of IMPRINT India (Impacting Research Innovation and Technology) brochure by PM Narendra Modi.

IVY LEAGUE WISDOM

Breaking the barriers of affordability, accessibility and geography, online courses have brought the best universities within reach of students all over the world

BY KARISHMA GOENKA





“
The biggest challenge we face is the mind-set that online certification does not compare to on-campus education”

Kabir Chadha | 29

INDIA COUNTRY HEAD, COURSERA

Coursera was created in 2012 within the classroom of two Stanford University professors who wanted to revolutionise online education and extend not just their own but the best courses to the whole world. Computer science professors Daphne Koller and Andrew Ng watched as their pet project grew at an unprecedented rate, reflecting the hunger for learning that brews in the hearts of the 16 million students registered from more than 190 countries they now cover.

➤ **The India Chapter** The 1.2 million strong user base from just India was reason enough for Coursera to shift focus to our country in 2014 where they roped in Kabir Chadha, a Stanford graduate and startup entrepreneur, to handle India operations. Today, while Coursera's Global Translator Community of over 1,800 people work on translating the English courses into different Indian languages, Chadha is focusing on building strong partnerships with not just the best institutes in India but also a number of corporates, aimed at creating locally relevant and industry collaborated content for students. “The young today know what they want. A survey we did recently revealed that while students in the US take online courses with the primary motive of expanding their knowledge base, Indians take online courses to be able to improve their chances of getting a job. This is an important aspect to understand when tailoring our approach for India,” says Chadha, who believes that the right courses can help bridge the gap between education and employability.

➤ **Challenge** “The main challenge we face is creating awareness about why online education needs to be taken seriously, especially by employers. There is a mind-set in our country that online education does not compare with on-campus courses, even though these courses are taught and evaluated the same for all types of students, with the same certificates.”

PHOTOGRAPHS BY RAJWANT RAWAT

Sandeep Bapna | 41

INDIA COUNTRY HEAD, KHAN ACADEMY

Mathematics has successfully induced fear in children across borders and generations. Salman Khan decided to create Khan academy when he saw the overwhelming response to the interactive maths tutorial videos he had created for his young cousin Nadia. Now, with more than 31 million registered students on the website, this non-profit hosts more than 580 million lessons covering all subjects by more than one million qualified teachers.

➤ **The India Chapter** While most free education platforms target higher education, Khan Academy has brought a revolutionary solution for India's problem of low quality elementary education, especially among low income groups. Spearheaded by Sandeep Bapna, an education startup entrepreneur, they plan to tie-up with NGOs in prominent cities. There are brands such as Central Square Foundation in Delhi creating localised content and translations of 500 maths lectures to start with. "India has one of the largest K-12 education systems in the world and there is a strong opportunity to empower both students and teachers in classroom and out-of-classroom settings," says Bapna.

➤ **Challenge** "The sheer scale and diversity of the Indian education landscape presents a significant challenge for any educator. In particular, it will be challenging to reach underserved populations who may have limited access to broadband networks."

“

Our localisation effort includes ensuring that our content is delivered in a relevant language, is aligned to local curricular standards and delivered in devices accessible by our target audience ”



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“

No one could have predicted the explosion of interest in MOOCs that has occurred. Nor can we truly predict where MOOC technology and research will lead us in future ”

Anant Agarwal | 55

FOUNDER, EDX

EdX, the result of a collaboration between Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology, was launched in May 2012 by MIT electrical engineering professor, Anant Agarwal. Originally from Mangalore, Agarwal wanted to collate services. Bringing together 90 of the best institutes from around the world, this not-for-profit aimed at enabling life-long learning for people, regardless of their age or economic background. “A large number of people around the world do not have access to quality education, and at the same time, education itself has not dramatically improved in quality or in efficiency in a long time. We want to make sure that quality education is not kept out of anyone’s reach and at the same time improve teaching on and off-campus,” says Agarwal.

► **The India Chapter** India has consistently represented the second highest enrollment in EdX courses, with around 6 lakh users. EdX has a long standing partnership with IIT Bombay, IIM Bangalore and BITS Pilani with a plethora of courses in engineering and business fields. They plan to continue extending their membership to more institutions. “Open online courses will change higher education in India by providing access to quality education in a country where demand exceeds supply. We plan to achieve this by helping schools in India offer blended courses on campus or purely online options depending on the particular institution’s need,” says Agarwal.

► **Challenge** “In India, the main challenge is improving access. We don’t want any student with the will to learn to be deprived of good quality education.”

STUDENT WISHLIST

While we gauge the pros and cons of online education, students clue us in on what they would like to see in these courses in the future

BY KARISHMA GOENKA



Rohan Kulkarni, 19, student, Universität Leipzig, Germany

I have done more than 10 courses online from EdX and Coursera on physics. MOOCs are the best form of learning right now because we have the option of pausing or replaying the professor's lecture infinite times, which is sadly not possible in a real classroom. Two things I would like to see changed in online education is having a little more stringent examination system so that students can work harder to pass, and I want to see more universities collaborating to create content. Just imagine a course on Quantum Physics by MIT, Caltech and Stanford together.



Olivia Das, 17, student, Temple University, USA

I have followed MOOCs since they came into the picture; I was in 9th grade then. Since then I have done 70 courses on Coursera and four on EdX.

A fantastic professor on one of these courses from Edinburgh, called Charles Cockell, was my reason for choosing Astrobiology as a career. Although I am quite happy with the content currently provided online, they could include courses on adult and organisational development that educates people on how to teach adults, as it is extremely relevant now.



Vivek Shangari, founder, Ace Hacker, Bangalore

I lost my parents at a very young age and did not receive education after high school under foster care as I had to start working. Today I have started a full-fledged coding academy and have more than 10 certificates in programming from online courses that I completed while working, despite not having a formal degree. In the future I would like to see online education become more interactive in nature using virtually simulated classrooms and augmented reality. For India, translating courses in all local languages could revolutionise access to education.

ADVANTAGES

FREE OF COST The greatest barrier to education has been poverty. Now the best universities and professors can be accessed by students globally without having to worry about a host of expenses that accompany a good education abroad.

DYNAMIC ARCHIVE With the plethora of good online content being created for the most diverse variety of courses, we already have a dynamic global resource bank that is growing by the day.

DIVERSE CLASSROOMS MOOCs bring together students from diverse backgrounds creating a global classroom, which can be an opportunity for individuals to gauge and evaluate their capabilities on a larger playing field.

SAMPLE BEFORE SELECTING For many students, sampling different online courses at a younger age has helped them select the right career and specialisation, depending on their interest.

STRESS FREE ENVIRONMENT Exam related stress is almost non-existent while learning online. Studies have proven children perform better and more creatively when not under pressure.

DISADVANTAGES

LOW INTERACTIVITY There is little actual interaction between teachers and students and personalised attention is rare. There is too much reliance on multimedia and inadequate practical exposure. Also there is no real time doubt clearing as opposed to an on-site classroom.

HINDERS PROPER EVALUATION Teachers running an online course are unable to evaluate all the students taking it, the numbers of which run into thousands for each course. Alternatively used peer-grading and computerised assessment cannot replace an actual teacher.

TIME MANAGEMENT Students, who are good at regimenting their time, make the most of these courses as compared to the ones who cannot commit to a schedule without external persuasion. It is also easier for students to drop out of these courses.

DESTROYERS OF HIGHER EDUCATION Many experts believe that MOOCs might lead to shrinking faculties and disrupt traditional higher education systems if they continue to grow in appeal.

CHANDRADEEP KUMAR



ALEX KLEIN (LEFT) AND ALEX JATON, CO-FOUNDERS, YOGATRAIL

“ It was difficult to attract investors initially, as most of them were male and thought yoga was an exercise largely practiced by women. **”**

Alex Klein,
Co-founder, YogaTrail

Inception of YogaTrail
in Chiang Mai, Thailand
with 3,000 users

MILESTONES

JUNE 2013

Silicon Valley
investors join
the pool

AUGUST 2015

Launched an app to
accompany the
YogaTrail website

NOVEMBER 2015

ROAD TO NIRVANA

YogaTrail enables enthusiasts to connect and share their wellness journey online

BY URSILA ALI

What is it?

A web entrepreneurship class at the Chiang Mai University, Thailand, was all it took for Alex Klein, 46, faculty at the Department of Physics there, to realise the need to set up a community of yoga followers online. Along with his wife, Alex Jaton, 38, and web developer Sven Ernest, 37, Klein set up an online directory for yoga practitioners and teachers which works like the travel website, TripAdvisor. YogaTrail, launched in 2013, is a comprehensive network of yoga enthusiasts and instructors spread around the world. One can sign up and connect with members of the yoga community in their area.

The growth

The website started with 3,000 people in its initial phase. After raising money from investors in Silicon Valley, YogaTrail witnessed a remarkable increase in traffic, with over a million members accessing the portal. Currently, the US accounts for half of their traffic, while UK and Canada come in second and account for 30 per cent of total users.

The challenge

“Chiang Mai University is not really known for its tech culture. So, we had a problem attracting tech talent to our venture,” says Jaton. The company now has a diverse talent pool with people from Ukraine, Australia, France, Brazil and Germany. Convincing yoga teachers to move from being independent contractors to bringing their business online was also a task.

The future

Klein and Jaton reveal that the next move for YogaTrail is setting up an app and later enabling users to not just view but book classes as well.

'DANCE WAS A CALLING'

Faith and consistent commitment to craft lights the way

BY ANINDITA SATPATHI



MALAVIKA SARUKKAI,
CLASSICAL DANCER AND CHOREOGRAPHER

Renowned as a performer for whom dance doubles as a belief system, Malavika Sarukkai all of 56 years, is a delight to watch on stage. Each motion evocative of multiple layered expressions, stems from her Bharatnatyam and Odissi background. Having learnt from Kalyanasundaram Pillai and Kelucharan Mohapatra, she has performed in USA, France, UK, Japan and Brazil. Her repertoire of acts extends to the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, New York, and John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Pioneers of skills not considered mainstream usually have to traverse a rocky road figuring out their priorities and commitments. Malavika's journey is different—as a child she was emphatic about being a dancer.

Support from family In a twist to the traditional tale of opposition and final reconciliation, Malavika's mother was her pillar of strength. Her mother's firm belief that she should pursue dance was life-affirming, allowing Sarukkai the luxury of choice. "My mother, Saroja Kamakshi was passionate about classical dance. I was luckily able to start my training in Mumbai with Guru Kalyanasundaram of the Sri Rajarajeshwari Bharata Natya Kala Mandir." A coveted dance teacher, his hands were always full, obliging him to give attention only to his most promising pupils. If I had to pick a favourite, it would be Bharatnatyam because it's a dance form that blossoms as you discover more of it. It requires commitment and discipline that, in turn, enhances your perception of your own movements.

Multiple sources of inspiration It is difficult to pick one inspirational figure. Inspiration comes from multiple sources and it's what impacts you and how you distill the experience as an artist. What you gain from it is your own estimation of awe-inspiring acts that you hold up as a standard. There are many renowned names who come to mind—my Gurus Kalyanasundaram Pillai, S K Rajarathnam and Smt Kalanidhi Narayanan. Legendary artists such as Smt T.Balasarawati, Smt Sanjukta Panigrahi, Sri M.D. Ramanathan, Sri K.V. Narayanaswamy, Sri Kavalam Narayana Panicker, Sri Ratan Thiyyam, Sri Bhimsen Joshi, Sri Bismillah Khan and Dr. B.N. Goswami. I could go on.

Dance as a career I have considered dance my career. I danced because I loved to and organically over time it developed into a career. We often underestimate the performing arts as a medium of communication. There's a reason why cultural exchanges between countries have a healing effect, it opens up our senses to what we perceive as otherness and helps us cultivate empathy. Beyond nullifying boundaries of geography, religion, language and culture, it makes an alien culture accessible and readable. It's a valuable potential we must tap in to create a sense of harmony in the increasingly violent times we live in.

Advice to students Stay true to your interests. Follow them even if you are met with opposition. Don't be blinded by ego, take the time out to listen to what your parents may be saying. Their concerns are valid and need respect. But if you're sure, do what your heart says.

WHEN INDIA SCORED A SLAM DUNK

India's first homegrown NBA player, Satnam Singh Bhamara, talks basketball, humility and never taking what you have for granted

BY KARISHMA GOENKA

It is futile to imagine just how tall NBA tenderfoot Satnam Singh Bhamara is in person, because your expectations will come crashing down as soon as he stands before you.

Towering over everyone for miles around at a colossal 7ft 2 inches, he will leave you gaping while invoking an instinctive urge to keep out of his way. By contrast, 19-year-old Satnam's mild and playful nature earns him a bunch of adoring hang-ers-on everywhere he goes, a sea change from his obscure life six years back.

Humble beginnings

This basketball prodigy's modest tale begins in a

nondescript Punjab village called Ballo Ke where he spent his early years helping his father with the family farm. His fate with basketball was more fortunate than his father, Balbir Singh Bhamara's, who had dreamed of playing basketball throughout his childhood years. Unfortunately Satnam's grandfather wasn't a fan of the idea and bound his son to duties of the farm. For this reason, Balbir made sure no one ever stood in the way of Satnam's desire to play. When at age 10 he decided to take up basketball, he was quickly noticed and found himself under the tutorage of acclaimed coach S. Subramanian. "My father

told me to live my dream and make something out of myself. The more I played, I more I was convinced that I was really good at the game," says Satnam. He trained for the under-14 nationals in 2009 but was unable to play on the day of the game because of a critical leg injury, which he had ignored for months and had suddenly resurfaced and gotten worse. "This was the difference between playing in India and playing abroad. The doctor told me my leg would heal by itself and I should continue playing. Here, a sportsperson's health is not taken seriously and there aren't many good doctors for young players," says Satnam.

The big break

In 2010, he travelled to Delhi to play in front of three American scouts on recommendation from his coach and was selected from among eight others for a fully paid sports scholarship at the IMG Academy in Bradenton, USA. "It was a long-term commitment, but I thought five years was nothing if I could make something of myself in that time. I decided that this was my shot and I had to work hard. I struggled the most with language in the beginning as it was hard for me to even communicate with the coaches who were training me. So I focused only on my playing and



TO BE A GOOD BASKETBALL PLAYER

► **Respect** It is important for a player to respect those who support him, such as his coach and parents, without this he will close himself off to learning.

► **Passion** If you are really serious about the game, the need to play like it comes right from the gut. It is highly unlikely that you will succeed if you do it for other reasons.

► **Focus** You cannot be a jack of all trades. Young players need to find the game that is right for them and singularly focus on it rather than dispersing their energy on too many activities.

► **Positivity** There will be many adversities you will face, especially if you love the game. You have to persist and stay positive through it all.



NBA PLAYER SATNAM
SINGH BHAMARA

CHANDRADEEP KUMAR

learning English during my stay there," says Satnam. In 2015, Satnam was selected in the 52nd pick of the Dallas Mavericks, becoming the first Indian basketball player to be drafted in the NBA.

Coaching abroad vs India

"I owe my success to my first coach Subramanian who was the best coach in my opinion. He had a library full of books on basketball tactics and coaching which he devoured to teach us the best he could. He was self-taught in the game and his knowledge of techniques was extensive. But then again, there is a fundamental difference in the way this game is played in both countries. Abroad, even if you painstakingly master a few moves, it is never considered enough. There is always a push to discover better moves and improve. On the other hand in India there is a mentality of 'kaam chalau' (settling with whatever you already have), and this way there will be no innovation and the game will never get ahead," he says ruefully.

Future plans

Satnam plans to take his family along to the US in the next few years and play there till he retires, "No one in my family has ever been on a plane. I want to show them a new country and how different life can be outside our little village. When I have achieved enough I will come back to India and coach children like me. I want to see basketball earn the same place that cricket has in this country in the near future."

Framework for Innovation

Tom Joseph, Senior Director, AutoDesk Education stresses the need to do away with stereotypes and let design thinking take centre stage



WE NEED TO HAVE STRONG DESIGN-ORIENTED THINKING MORE THAN TECHNICAL SKILL SETS

**Tom Joseph,
Senior Director,
AutoDesk Education, US**

Design creates a culture; it helps in addressing problems, finding solutions and thinking critically. That's how important it is. When it comes to education, it becomes all the more essential to use design as an opportunity to change mindsets, encourage lateral thinking and yet continue telling the story. These are some of the observations that Tom Joseph, Senior Director, AutoDesk Education, the US-based 3D design software company that supports students and educators with free software access, shared with India Today Aspire.

NEED FOR DESIGN-ORIENTED THINKING

We can't make students more creative through curricula taught at colleges only; we need to change their mindset and inculcate a sense of design in them as well. If we look at the Indian education scenario, we lack the ability to synthesise. So there is a need to have a curriculum which is creative and innovative, encourages students to analyse facts and look for potential solutions to problems. That's where design thinking comes in to help them empathise better with the environment; successful design addresses solutions on all fronts. In fact, strong design-oriented thinking is more important than technical skills.

STIGMA TOWARDS FAILURE

Yes, we do have a problem with fear of failure unlike the West where there is no phobia at all. I am of the view that if you don't falter, it is impossible for you to learn and grow. There is the need to have a project-based learning approach with stress on design, so that new technology, skill sets and new age thinking can be introduced in the classrooms and workplaces. We also need to make technology easily accessible to students so that they can give shape to their ideas and creativity.

EMERGING TRENDS IN DESIGN EDUCATION

Additive manufacturing is proving to be a big movement currently. It is through 3D printer technology that we can create and manufacture design in a novel fashion. Also, virtual and augmentative reality is drawing attention due to its ability to help generate special effects in movies. Third and most importantly, the Maker Movement is not just challenging the way we think, but is also bringing about a change in the manner our students learn. Children have always loved making things on their own and are fortunately more comfortable using tools and technology than most of us. The maker movement will play the role of an incubator for potential inventors of tomorrow.

As told to Shelly Anand



LET'S GET IT STARTED

A startup is more about hard work than an uber-cool cubicle. Here is the lowdown on what to expect and what will be expected of you at the workplace.



BY AJAY NAIR,
CHIEF ADMINISTRATION OFFICER,
HOUSING.COM, REAL ESTATE
SEARCH PORTAL, MUMBAI

Working in a startup may sound exciting, and most of the time it's justifiably so. The rush, euphoria and chaos associated with it can be exhilarating. With the mushrooming of start-ups and opportunities for youngsters, employers are having trouble shortlisting the ideal candidate for a position. But with the right mix of academic qualification, passion and attitude, you are sure to land that much coveted job. Here's what to look out for:

► For starters, expect the unexpected. Change and unpredictability are practically its synonyms. Things change sporadically in a startup and one is expected to adapt to the situation. Be it the way the company is run, its management structure, culture or your own job profile, nothing is settled. For better or for worse, this volatile nature ensures there is never a boring day in the company.

► Don't be fooled by its cool culture and funky ambience. Startups are not just about casual dressing, football tables and impromptu parties. Being an early stage company, work pressures are high, making it a fast-paced environment where the deadline is always yesterday. Employees usually put in long hours and often have to take up multiple responsibilities. While this may be frustrating for some, it's also a great opportunity to



IMAGES BAZAAR

BEFORE JOINING A STARTUP

- IS THE STARTUP SOLVING A REAL PROBLEM?** Connecting with the vision of the company and believing in its existence is crucial in the long haul.
- WHO IS RUNNING THE COMPANY?** Studying about the founders, its management and investors is helpful.
- WHY AM I JOINING?** If you are joining for monetary progress or its smart culture, you might want to think twice. You would last longer if your reasons were along the lines of 'learning', 'growth' and 'innovation'.
- HOW DO I FEEL?** Startups are about passionate people who are brimming with energy and excited about their work, this attitude is required for one to stand against all odds.

develop different skill sets and interests.

► Working with a startup can in many ways be a life-changing experience. You can learn the challenges of building a company while working alongside a bunch of passionate people, innovating technology and being a part of a revolutionary product.

► A non-hierarchical structure in a startup ensures that lines blur between the boss and the employee. Closely interacting alongside the founders can be quite an enriching experience. It organically instills an entrepreneurial spirit and there is also more scope for individuals to shine as opposed to a conventional company.

► Startups usually accommodate young employees who hold strong opinions and are vocal about their views. Communication is usually open and one has the freedom to complain or compliment irrespective of their position. The confidence to express views and the assurance of being heard boosts collaborative effort and the spirit of teamwork.



BY SAMEER SUD,
GENERAL MANAGER,
THE LEELA MUMBAI

1 BEFORE TAKING THE PLUNGE

While it is preferable that an aspirant gets trained from an institute that offers hotel management studies, it is no hard and fast rule that the student has to come from a specific stream. The aspirant can be from science, arts, engineering or any other background; it does not matter as the hotel industry has a variety of job openings with a number of portfolios. There are government institutes run by the Ministry of Tourism as well as private colleges that offer three to four-year courses. An aspirant can join any of them provided it is a reputed institution with a curriculum at par with other national and international standards.

2 BE PASSIONATE

To be a hotelier, one has to have passion, as hard work led by zest is important in order to taste success in this industry. Passion inspires your team members and also enhances the team's attitude, involvement quotient and performance levels.

CARVE OUT A CAREER IN HOSPITALITY

Strong communication skills, zeal to work hard and team spirit are what you need to succeed in the hotel industry

3 DRIVEN BY AMBITION

It is important to understand one's strengths in the early years of one's career to grow within the department most suited to your personality. The hospitality industry is a dynamic and growing industry offering excellent opportunities and growth for ambitious individuals, especially those with good people management skills. As the industry functions in a very competitive environment, one must focus on honing business management skills as well as develop good customer interface skills.

PEOPLE'S PERSON

Having the skill sets to manage people and team spirit is most important. Daily interactions with guests sets the bar for sociability. Be warm while cultivating your service persona. All your guests don't think alike; tune in to who appreciates what. This also requires presence of mind for on-the-spot decisions. When dealing with colleagues and guests this is the key to success in this career.

5 COMMUNICATION MATTERS

Cultivate good communication skills as the job involves people. As one goes up the ladder, clear communication with staff is vital for the team to have clarity about their responsibilities. With guests, positive and decisive communication is reassuring especially when dealing with a complaint or request.

DEVELOP LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Always lead by example, look smart, present yourself well, prepare well and be approachable. Your colleagues should feel like you can be approached and your door is always open for them. Guests should also feel the same. A good leader listens and most importantly, is approachable.



7 STAY DETERMINED
While determination alone won't pull you through, it plays a critical role in helping you stick it out. A career in the hospitality industry is a tricky one that demands your undivided time and commitment. In the early stages of your career, you can expect to have no time for yourself. Firm determination will definitely help maximise output, therefore ensuring growth in the field.

8 NETWORKING QUALITIES
This skill helps one grow as a mature professional as well as expand business for the hotel. It often takes one outside the hotel environment and into the community. Networking is nothing but developing strong workplace relations to enhance and humanise a business environment. Being a people's person and having communication skills is a natural progression towards developing a strong network. The adage, 'It's not what you know but who you know' sums this up perfectly.

9 MAKE FLEXIBILITY RULE
Flexibility at work is becoming increasingly important at any level of management. While there are no prescribed rules for flexibility, it is advantageous to adopt a flexible attitude when it comes to working in this industry. It shows that one values diversity in an industry which allows you to encounter guests and colleagues from different walks of life on a daily basis. Flexibility also allows one to absorb new learning and innovation in this dynamic industry.

10 SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY
As the economy grows, there are more and more hotel chains expanding in different markets. With this growth, propelled by tourism and business travel, the demand for well-trained quality personnel has also increased. The diversity of experience in hotel management is far greater than in any other profession. The rise in corporate activity and the aspiration to travel on holiday has made the hotel industry not only see an increase in job opportunities but also become a very competitive industry.

SCHOOL OF NEW THOUGHT

How can classrooms be reinvented to nurture a sense of creativity in the next generation



BY LENE JENSBY LANGE,
FOUNDER, AUTENS FUTURE
SCHOOLS AND HEAD OF GLOBAL
SCHOOL ALLIANCE, DENMARK

School buildings across the world are rapidly turning into museums of early last century learning. Not because they change, but because they don't. Meanwhile everything in them is about to change. Traditional, industrial-style school design with long corridors of similar classrooms and identical desks in rows models a learning culture that is no longer relevant.

HOW DO WE LEARN?

What does engaging contemporary learning look like? We do in fact have very accurate knowledge of what works. When a person is engaged in meaningful work, which they can relate to, preferably collaborative, experiential and hands-on, working on the border of their competencies and enjoying the process, powerful learning can take

place. Schools today need to be educating children for a changing global world in which most future jobs have not yet been created. Make no mistake; being able to memorise a lot of facts is not going to cut it. Our children need to become independent thinkers, emphatic collaborators, innovators and powerful communicators with a lifelong motivation to learn.

THE UNSPOKEN MESSAGE

Interior design plays a role in shaping how we learn, work and interact. Spaces silently communicate what is expected of us, and we act accordingly. It is an invisible hand that guides us. The traditional classroom tells us to sit down, be quiet, do what everybody else is doing and only speak when asked. This design model is based on two major misconceptions about human nature. That we are all alike and learn in the same way and that we are naturally lazy and will resist learning if not monitored.

Nothing could be further from the truth. We are different and do learn in different ways. And we are natural-born learners. Learning is biologically designed to be joyful, a natural drug to ensure our survival if not disturbed by



imposed systems that teaches us otherwise. Yet we have designed schools to be one-dimensional teaching factories, deliberately targeted at pacifying learners.

What we need today is school interiors designed to nudge teachers and learners to be creative, think, explore, innovate and collaborate. Companies are crying out for self-driven, engaged knowledge workers who

can navigate and create new paths, which is also important on a personal level in today's world. We are beginning to see a growing number of schools customising their interior design to 21st century learning.

NO BACKBENCHERS

I recently worked with a Scandinavian school which was transforming their classroom into active spaces for



DESIGNING INTERIORS THAT
NUDGE CREATIVITY

a 21st century pedagogy. Reorganising the use of spaces and adding a new set of furniture have completely turned things around. The school now has a variety of options for working and learning. Children can move around freely and choose where they would like to work. According to both learners and teachers, learning has now become more focused, personalised,

collaborative and engaging. One excited 11-year-old really hit the nail when he told me, "I used to sit in the back of the classroom. Now there is no back of the classroom." Another learner mentioned that being able to pick a more isolated spot really improved her concentration. The brownie point is that children inherently become even more aware of how they learn best.

LET'S PLAY

Looking at major companies such as Google, AirBnB, Microsoft and Lego, we see a clear move towards informal collaborative and even playful environments to encourage interaction, creativity, engagement and innovation. There is no reason why schools should be any different. Companies do it because it increases performance and not least make them more

attractive to employees. We need to change our image of schools from disciplining structures to flexible neural networks connecting learners with the richness of people, knowledge, technology and opportunities around them. Through inspiring environments we can support the new learning cultures that are necessary today, creating vastly improved learning experiences for our students.



THINKSTOCK

BUILDING WORKPLACES OF THE FUTURE

As technology takes over the world, we look at how the management of human resources is set to change in office spaces and how we can make the most of it



BY RICHARD COWLEY,
FOUNDER, WORKAMMO,
HR SOLUTIONS COMPANY, UK

In the broadest sense, the definition of a workplace has not changed over the decades. It is still an area where people work such as an office or factory or an individual's place of employment. However, we can see reality evolving faster than the definition. The reality is that a home, car, cafe and train have become extensions of the traditional office or field of work. The workplace is changing, and how. What was once buddy-buddy in the

same office has now changed to virtual teams spread across several geographies. Open plan offices have emerged in place of the traditional rabbit hutch floor plan.

Add to that the growing trend of 'hot desking' where your workspace changes daily and your in-tray is mobile. Last, but not the least, the transition from face-to-face to email or chat. With constant variation and complexity in these collaborative yet impersonal workplaces, it was inevitable that the traditional structures had to succumb. I have heard that the 'new' millennial generation is the main contributor to the evolution of this new workplace. Although I tend to believe that it is simply technology that accelerated this change, if one explores the context further down to the individual job level, the implications of this change are numerous, fuelling the need for a rethink about the future workplace. As individuals, human resource leaders, and organisations, it's important for us to take note, and adapt. Here's my list of ways in which workplaces are changing, where they're headed, and how we can make the most of it.

SIMPLER PROCESSES

Technology enables process simplification, which improves productivity and can drive down customer pricing. With the elimination of non-value added work through the use of technology at the basic level, we will start to evaluate established norms and practices and their lack of value, at a more macro level. For example, why get in a car, drive to many shops to see and compare prices when you can review them online and get delivery in less than one day, often at a much reduced price? This will lead to a drive to take out the 'middle man' and traditional jobs filled by less educated and skilled masses are going to be hit the worst. The onus, then, is upon young entrants of the workforce to take charge of their careers, evaluate skills from this newfound perspective, and

consistently develop them. Employers, too, must pitch in to meet needs of the present, with those of the future in mind.

INVERTED COMPETENCIES

Gone are the days when your age and seniority meant a higher level of competence. Jobs in fields like law and medicine, where application and experience develop over time, will continue to survive this paradigm. However, for functions such as marketing and sales, the knowledge of technology, awareness of social media tools, and new ways of doing business are held with the young. Hence the inverted competency model, where the young have more to contribute than the experienced. As human resource practitioners, it will be critical that we help our existing leaders, managers and supervisors to be effective in this new paradigm; building conducive structures to enable the young to contribute and lead with authority will be critical for some industries.



IMAGES BAZAAR

GOING BEYOND ENGAGEMENT, TOWARDS RELATIONSHIPS

We hear a lot of talk about employee engagement these days. I am convinced that the belief that employee engagement is key to retention, is misplaced. If the aim of productive workplaces is to enhance employee-employer relationships,

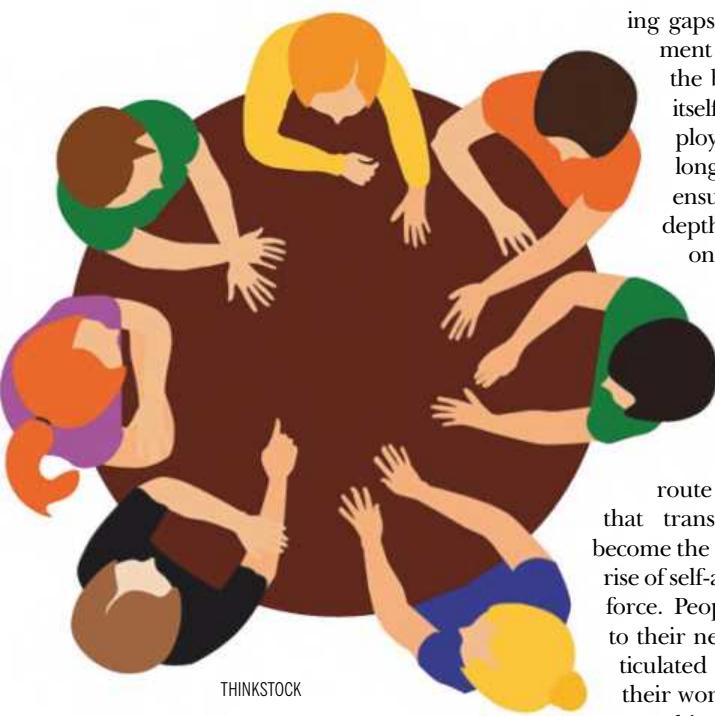
we must build bridges to cross existing gaps. In my view, engagement is merely one brick in the bridge, not the bridge itself. Thinking of an employment contract as a long term relationship will ensure that we value the depth required in building one, versus momentary engagement.

Relationships require considerable commitment from both sides to stay open. The other route is to simply accept that transient workforces will become the norm. We are seeing a rise of self-awareness in the workforce. People seem more tuned to their needs and have well-articulated expectations from their workplace. Some look for an ethical and socially respon-

sible organisation, while others may look for professional development. It is imperative to shape workplaces that take the needs of each one into consideration. The new workplace demands that we focus on the fact that what got us here is not what will get us where we want to be in the future.

Beyond the general, and frankly, superficial needs of the workforce such as a pleasant work environment, food stations and gyms, serious considerations are going to determine whether we are going to be remembered as the generation who worked to hold on to the past or those who created the future. The great news is that companies are recognising the newer needs of the workforce, with policies that cover effective social responsibility to enabling greater work-life balance.

Human resource departments are focused on this need, and the transformation required to close the gaps has already commenced. New entrants to the workforce are increasingly aware and vocal about their demands, and this helps businesses take note and adapt, too. Assertive collective action will ensure that we evolve at a pace faster than our surrounding environment, building workplaces that inspire individuals and empower businesses.



THINKSTOCK

WHY MANUFACTURING WILL RULE THE ROOST

Five reasons why manufacturing careers will flourish with the growth of innovation and globalisation



**BY ASHISH BHAT,
EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT,
DIGITAL FACTORY, SIEMENS
INDIA, MUMBAI**



MAKE IN INDIA'

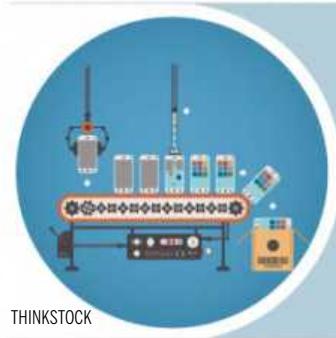
The government's 'Make in India' drive calls for a higher demand for professionals to boost skill development and turn India into a manufacturing powerhouse. The focus should be to inculcate a culture of thinking at the school level to develop young minds for innovation.



THINKSTOCK

GLOBAL COMPETITION

Indian companies are facing global competition both in the domestic and global markets. Not just larger manufacturing companies, but even small and medium scale (SMEs) manufacturers are keen to have production technologies that can make them faster, flexible and efficient. We can see the rise of SMEs with the sector providing employment to over 80 million people.



THINKSTOCK

ROADMAP FOR ECONOMIC REFORM

With a clear vision and roadmap for economic reform, the government has initiated measures to improve the confidence of business and investors. It bodes well for aspiring engineers, researchers and managers. Manufacturing companies are aware that, for success in India, they need to focus on constant collaboration and seamless technology transfer. This will ensure localised products of high quality and customised features available simultaneously across markets. Competitive advantage is built through the 'design, engineer, source, manufacture, deliver' approach for the Indian market. With ample boost, the economy will intrinsically evolve a mechanism for revival.

HIGH-PERFORMANCE CULTURE

Talented youth can look forward to an empowered, high-performance culture, which encourage life-long learning and development while offering attractive working environments and occupational health and safety. Manufacturing and engineering companies are the real nation-builders and talents who are part of this workforce have an additional incentive to make a mark in history. For India, this could well be the starting point for the future of manufacturing.

THINKSTOCK



DIGITALISATION

Digitalisation in manufacturing is opening up completely new opportunities to make products and solutions smarter. Soon the Internet of Things (IoT) will be leading to collaborative ways for machines and people to interact. Innovative solutions in the fields of software and automation are increasingly finding acceptance among manufacturers and industries, leading to a change in the skill sets demanded by industry.





09:41



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CELEBRITIES REVEAL THEIR
NEW YEAR'S EVE PLANS

WAMIQA GABBI, ACTOR

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Reviews**

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COVER STORY

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Simply Punjabi eavesdrops on New Year Eve's plans of some well-known people in the region.

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Pakistani theatre director and activist Huma Safdar says legendary

Punjabi love stories have always been a war cry against intolerance.

FILM

Zero Motivation Is All You Need 22

Israeli filmmaker Talya Lavie despises the term woman filmmaker saying it is demeaning and tends to slot a creative person.

Cover photo by MANDAR DEODHAR

OUR PICK of the month

D-Day Pampering

Till December 31

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Anything newsworthy? Please email us at: simplypunjab@intoday.com



KNOW WAMIQA GABBI

- 1 Acted in Hindi films like *Jab We Met* (2007) and *Sixteen* (2013) and Punjabi ones including *Tu Mera 22 Main Tera 22* (2013), *Ishq Haazir Hai* (2015), *Ishq Brandy* (2014)
- 2 Her Tamil and Telugu films, *Maalai Nerathu Mayakkam* and *Bhale Manchi Roju*, respectively will be released soon.

New beginnings

FROM SOLO VACATIONS ABROAD TO STICKING TO THE STUDY TABLE AND COMPLETING A PROJECT ON BHAGAT SINGH, SIMPLY PUNJABI EAVESDROPS ON NEW YEAR EVE'S PLANS OF SOME WELL-KNOWN PEOPLE IN THE REGION

By SUKANT DEEPAK

► **WAMIQA GABBI, 22,**
Actor, Chandigarh

SPELLING NEW YEAR'S EVE "This is one day of the year when I completely let go and indulge in whatever I want to. I always ensure that this period is not about stressing about work but giving myself another chance. One takes so many decisions during the year that do not really yield the expected results. The day is also about promising oneself a good balance of work and relaxation and excelling in the craft of acting in the coming year."

► **ON THE NIGHT OF DECEMBER 31** "I want to holiday solo in Singapore. Last year was about partying with new and old friends in Lonavla. But this time, I want to travel on New Year's Eve. For a very long time, I have wanted to experience the world alone and see what other cultures do to me when I am not surrounded by friends or family. I think it makes a lot of sense to start doing that on the New Year's Eve and keep doing that in 2016."

► **HOPING FOR 2016** "Like most actors, I am looking forward and hoping to do films that offer me a chance to showcase my acting skills to the fullest. I pray that challenging roles come my way next year. Considering the fact that I am already doing South Indian films, I would like to work with young directors from different other regional industries who are willing to go beyond clichéd storylines and age-old treatments. As far as Punjabi films are concerned, yes, I am open to them but I will not sign just any script that comes my way. It is important that the role I am offered excites me."

Photograph by SANDEEP SAHDEV



GEETANJALI GUPTA, 33,
Social Worker, Chandigarh

SPELLING NEW YEAR'S EVE "New Year's for me has always been about making more powerful goals in order to push myself further. I have always been a career woman so it is important for me to be focussed, and New Year's Eve always provides me an opportunity to draft the same. No doubt it is about introspection, but I do not like to think too much about that and I prefer to look forward. I did accomplish a lot in 2015 in terms of joining this NGO, moving and comfortably settling into a set up which is completely different from where I come from."

► **ON THE NIGHT OF DECEMBER 31**
Partying with a group of friends

KNOW GEETANJALI GUPTA

- 1 Commonwealth Scholar from University of Massachusetts, Amherst, USA (2002)
- 2 Former Business Consultant with Emdico London, UK (2010-2012)
- 3 Director of NGO Sardarni Kartar Kaur Charitable Trust at Mauli Jagran, which teaches stitching to underprivileged women

is always a perfect way to usher in the new year. I was in Delhi last year with friends where we enjoyed some fantastic wine and cheese. This New Year's Eve, I am going there again."

► **HOPING FOR 2016** "There are already more than 80 girls in different age groups who are learning stitching at our NGO. I plan to increase the number of trainees by upgrading the infrastructure and also include English speaking and personality development courses for them. This is besides the computer courses we will start for those employed with Bumble Bee, the marketing arm for the goods produced by women at the Trust."



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> HARMEET KAHLON, 46, Sportsperson, Chandigarh

SPELLING NEW YEAR'S EVE "The day holds special significance as I set all my targets for the next year on the New Year's Eve. Frankly, more than setting the target it is about exercising your mind—how can I push myself further? I may have received the most prestigious awards and proved my mettle against the best players, but I would definitely like to push my limits in 2016. Yes, the day is also about spending time with my wife and child and listening to their new year's resolutions."

► **ON THE NIGHT OF DECEMBER 31**

"Though for the past few years, we have been spending the New

KNOW HARMEET KAHLON

- 1 Recipient of the Arjuna Award for Excellence in Golf (1998)
- 2 International Winner (Professional) Asia Tour—Hero Honda Masters (2002)
- 3 Director of Chandigarh Golf Club Academy and Castle Sports Golf Club Academy at Mohali Golf Range

Year's Eve at home, this time all the family members want to let their hair down in Goa. No, it won't just be about the beaches but also exploring places not generally visited by tourists and getting the real feel of the place. I think a few days there will surely rejuvenate me to take on 2016 head-on."

► **HOPING FOR 2016**

I plan to get back to the professional circuit next year and play competitive golf. I could not do that this year because of some back issues. Next year would be about focusing on my fitness level and giving the best to my game."

Photograph by SANDEEP SAHDEV





Photograph by SANDEEP SAHDEV

➤ **KAMAL TEWARI, 68,** *Theatreperson, Chandigarh*

SPELLING NEW YEAR'S EVE
“Isn't every day a new day? I have always believed in planning for one day and living it to the fullest. This does not mean that one does not enjoy the general air of festivity that surrounds this period. Somewhere in a corner of the mind there is always a wish that the coming year brings with it

interesting projects and happiness in all its manifestations.”

► ON THE NIGHT OF DECEMBER 31

“There was a time when it was a good excuse to do some *addabazi* with friends and sing timeless *ghazals*. But I guess as age catches up, one finds all that too taxing and prefers to spend time with family. That is what I would like to do, with flashbacks of 2015 in

attendance. Of course, this will be possible only if I am not shooting for my yet to be aired serial.”

► HOPING FOR 2016

“Like any other artist, I am hoping to do solid work. Last year was about taking a lot of theatre workshops for the National School of Drama. Besides the serial I am doing, I may also sign a film in 2016.”

KNOW KAMAL TEWARI

- 1 Recipient of the Sangeet Natak Akademi honour in the year 1999-2000. Has composed music for more than 60 theatre productions.
- 2 Composed music for Punjabi play *Rani Jinda*, 1981, that was performed at Broadway in New York and 15 other cities in the United States and Canada.
- 3 Acted in films including *Train to Pakistan* (1998), *Shaheed Udhamp Singh* (2000), *The Blue Umbrella* (2005), *Omkara* (2006), *Jab We Met* (2007) and *Mausam* (2011)



Photograph by SANDEEP SAHDEV

SIMRAN GOSAL BHULLAR, 46,

Jewellery Designer, Chandigarh

PELLING NEW YEAR'S EVE

"The last days of every year are especially exciting as the word re-invention keeps echoing in the ears. It really does not matter how many resolves for the upcoming year one manages to keep. What is important is that we start thinking about ourselves—how we will make things better, how we will change what affects us. In the coming year, I want to pay more attention to my health and fitness, concentrating especially on learning the art of breathing as a lifestyle change."

► ON THE NIGHT OF DECEMBER 31

"Though last year was about

KNOW SIMRAN GOSAL BHULLAR

- 1** One of the best known jewellery designers in the region specialising in Kundan jewellery.
- 2** Her brand brings out traditional motifs from Punjab, Rajasthan and Hyderabad, blending them with modern designs.
- 2** Besides local customers, Anaha jewellery has patrons across the world.

partying with close friends in Chandigarh, this time I want to go to Glasshouse on The Ganges in Rishikesh, Uttarakhand. I plan to witness the mesmerising *aarti* on the Ganges, river raft and explore the Rajaji National Park."

► HOPING FOR 2016

"I am determined to give several surprises to my patrons with diverse designs from the house of Anaha. I have always believed that it is important to constantly challenge oneself, not just to stay on top of the game when it comes to the market, but on a personal level too. It keeps you going mentally and emotionally."

Photograph by SANDEEP SAHDEV

CHAMAN LAL, 68,

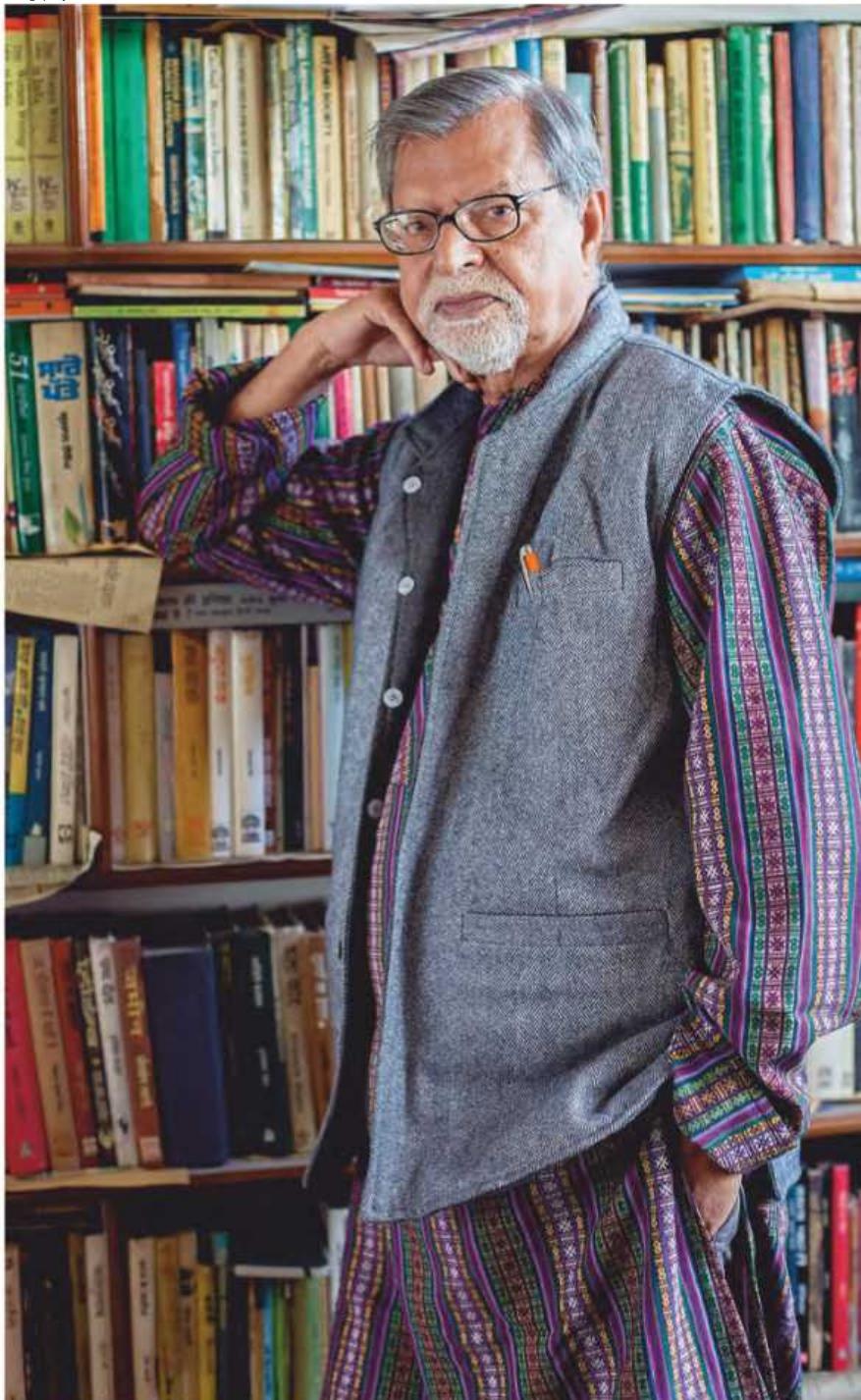
Translator and expert on
Bhagat Singh, Patiala

SPELLING NEW YEAR'S EVE "No matter how old-fashioned this may sound but every December 31 is about introspection for me. Not just on the personal level but also what went around me the whole year. The year 2015 was about the state suffocating freedom of speech and keeping mum on killing of rationalists. But I feel that year ended on a very optimistic note. The returning of major awards by prominent writers proved that the conscience of the country was still alive. It gave a certain hope to everyone, that there are still some people out there who will raise their voice against injustice. This hope is the most important thing, something which keeps us going."

► **ON THE NIGHT OF DECEMBER 31**

"Well, you surely won't see me at a discotheque, if that's what you are asking. But on a serious note, I think I will be in my study in the company of my old musty books, writing another paper on Bhagat Singh or translating a poem. Well, like every night, I might also make a cup of tea for myself and dream of a better year ahead for myself. And everyone."

► **HOPING FOR 2016** "I am hoping that my complete writings on Bhagat Singh in English will be published in 2016. Besides, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in Delhi has accepted in principle my proposal to set up a Bhagat Singh Archives. I will gift my entire private archives to JNU once that's done. On the societal front, I wish that we regain the liberal space that we lost after the last general elections. Maybe the recent poll results in Bihar will provide a breather."



KNOW CHAMAN LAL

1 Sahitya Akademi National Translation Prize in 2002 (which he returned recently).

2 National Award by Central Hindi Directorate in 2001.

3 Life Member, Indian History Congress.

4 Written 12 books on Bhagat Singh (eight in Hindi, two in English and two in Punjabi).



Photographs by SANDEEP SAHDEV



(Clockwise from top) Interiors of The Rumour Mill; bacon sandwich; Indian *Nashta*; triple decker falafel sandwich

1 The New Hangout

Enter the The Rumour Mill and you will see youngsters reciting poetry, checking out books or playing a video game. A simple set up comprising comfortable couches and low seats, the cosy place has on its walls some interesting photographs by Chandigarh-based photographer Sanjeev Sharma, besides post-modern installations and eclectic wall art. With interesting names for dishes, our table witnessed Mount Orizaba Nachos, a heap of nachos topped with tomatoes and chillis and served with green chilli, with homemade sour cream for a starter. If you are a non-vegetarian, the Thela Style Fish Fry should not be missed. Special Sultani Dal and the much-loved Arhar Dal cooked in a cream are available in the main course and have taste so wonderful to pull you back another time. For breakfast, try the Indian *Nashta* comprising egg or corn paneer bhurji, masala poha and aloo cutlet, served with buttered paav. The Rumour Mill is perfect to be an adda of people and ideas, revolving around comfort food, stimulating conversations and the world of arts.

Meal for two Rs 1,000

At SCO 187, Inner Market,
Sector 7C, Chandigarh

Tel 9888400054 ■ **By** Sukant Deepak





11 THINGS TO LOOK FORWARD TO

CULTURAL, SOIRÉE

Till December 6

Chandigarh is all set to host the seventh edition of Arts and Heritage Festival, a five-day event aimed at showcasing the best in music, theatre and literature by nationally and internationally-acclaimed artists.

AT Tagore Theatre, Sector 18,
Chandigarh

TEL 01722724278

2 A HEALTHY START

Till March 21

From techniques to tactile experiences, breath control to movements, energy to inner strength, start the new year with Swami Yogananda's classes that focus on the holistic nature of the ancient tradition and science of yoga.

AT House Number 34, Sector 10, Chandigarh

DETAILS 9816475445 TIMINGS 7.30 a.m., 9 a.m., 6 p.m.





5 MIDNIGHT BASH

December 31

Get set for a classy New Year's Eve at JW Marriott, Chandigarh. Promising to be a night you won't forget for a long time, the hotel is all set to floor its guests with elegant ambiance, renowned DJ's mixing stellar tunes and heady live performances. Now that should provide you enough spirit to slip into 2016 seamlessly.

COST PER COUPLE

Rs 899 plus taxes onwards

AT JW Marriott Hotel
Chandigarh, Plot no 6,
Sector 35-B, Dakshin Marg
Chandigarh

TEL 9988898309

4 HOME BEAUTIFUL

December 18 to 21

Planning to give a facelift to your home? The upcoming Interior Show is just the place for you. It promises to be a one-stop shop for upholstery, framed artworks, wooden artifacts, metal sculptures, lamps, curios, artificial flowers, and many more products.

AT Kisan Bhawan, Sector 35, Chandigarh
TEL 01725039154



6 Bazaar Diaries

December 16

This is a special fair which gives the visitors an opportunity to pick up the latest, the hippest and the most fashionable stuff. A perfect destination for fashion enthusiasts, art lovers and antique collectors, you are bound to find the best of everything here.

AT Ramada Jalandhar City Centre,
Nam Dev Chowk, G.T. Road, Jalandhar
TEL 01814390000





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7

GRAND TREAT

January 1

Give your tastebuds a break from the butter chicken and instead indulge in some other delicacies on the first day of the new year. Head to Hyatt Amritsar for an extensive buffet that includes hearty Asian, Italian and Indian specialties.

MEAL FOR TWO Rs 3,600

(inclusive of food and soft beverages)

AT Collage, Hyatt Amritsar, Adjoining Alpha One City Centre, G.T. Road, Amritsar**TEL** 01832871234**TIMINGS** 1.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m.

8

FAIR TRADE

August 8

PITEX, the Punjab International Trade Expo is a five-day mega trade exhibition will showcase products related to agriculture, food and farm, travel, tours and handicrafts, real estate and finance and much more.

AT Ranjit Avenue, Ajnala Road, Amritsar

9 FESTIVE FEAST CHRISTMAS EVE SPECIAL

December 24

Ring in the Christmas with a traditional Christmas special buffet. The buffet includes an array of delicacies including roast turkey, turkey casserole, sea food grill, live stations of bruschettas, risotto and handmade fresh pastas.

MEAL FOR TWO Rs 4,400 plus taxes (inclusive of food, selected spirits, beer and wine) **AT** Kitchen at 95, Hyatt Regency, Ludhiana **TIMINGS** 1.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m.

10 IN HOUSE

December 11 to 14

Ring in the new year by refurbishing your home and head to CII Ludhiana Fair for all things latest. This premium shopping festival offers an array of products ranging from consumer durables and non-durables, gift items and handicrafts, household consumables and lots more.

AT Government College for Girls in Ludhiana

TEL 01612449650



11 CRAFTS CORNER

December 25 to January 3

Kalagram will host a National Craft Mela that will witness participants from across the country display their products. Arts and crafts, folk traditional crafts, handicraft products, handlooms will be available at the mela at attractive prices. More than 300 folk dancers will also be present to enthrall visitors. Diverse food and music from different states are some of the highlights of the mela.

AT Kalagram, Madhya Marg, Near Bitta Petrol Pump, Manimajra, South, Chandigarh **AT** 01722735462

HOT BUYS



ON THE SHELVES

SIMPLY PUNJABI LISTS
SOME LATEST PRODUCTS
SETTING THE TRENDS
THIS SEASON





7



1 Kurta, W, Rs 2499,
W stores across the city
2 Wrangler Jeans, Rs 3895
onwards, Wrangler stores
across the city
3 Jacket, La Martina,
Price on request,
lamartina.com
4 Boots, Alberto
Toressi, Rs 3995,
albertotorresi.com
5 Kurta, Fusion Beats,
Rs 2199, fusionbeats.in
6 Face Wash, Organic
Harvest, Rs 745,
organicharvest.in
7 Shirt, Anomaly, Rs 3200,
shopanomaly.in
8 Pyjamas, Jack and Jones,
Rs 995, Jack and Jones
stores across the city
9 Shoes, Fabi, Price on
request, fabiboutique.com



8



9

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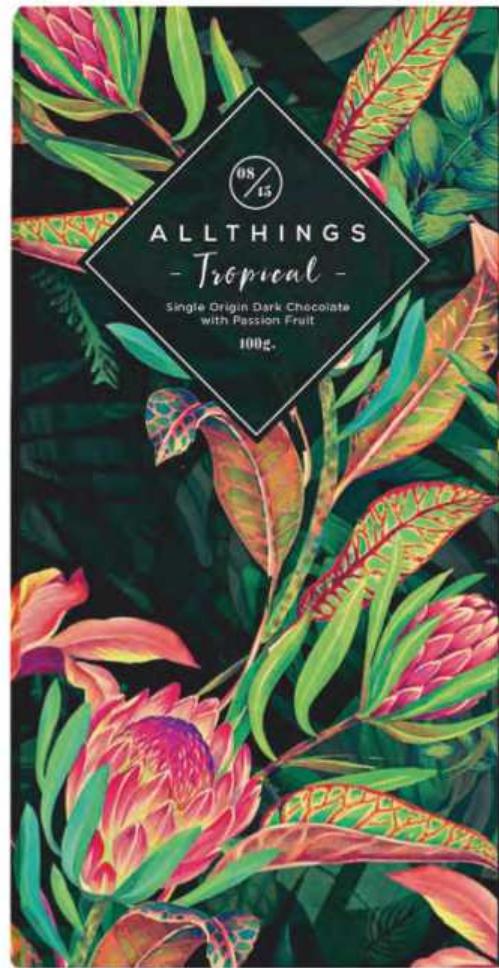
NOW OPEN at 3rd Floor, ELANTE MALL, Chandigarh

HOT BUYS





10 Sunglasses, Ray Ban, Rs 14,990, rayban.com/India
11 Headphones, Skullcandy, Rs 5999, brandeyeonline.com
12 Shoes, Vans, Rs 4999 onwards, Vans stores across the city
13 Clutch, Cord, Rs 4000, facebook.com/cord.27
14 Neckpiece, Mirari, Price on request, mirari.com/shop/
15 Top, PostFold, Rs 999, postfold.com
16 Chocolates, All Things Tropical, Rs 350 onwards, theallthingsshop.com



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Huma Safdar, theatre director and activist

PROTEST'S LOVE STORY

THEATRE DIRECTOR AND ACTIVIST, HUMA SAFDAR SAYS LEGENDARY PUNJABI LOVE STORIES ARE A WAR CRY AGAINST INTOLERANCE

By SUKANT DEEPAK

In an auditorium in Chandigarh, which does not have the acoustics for a theatre production, she is sitting at the far end to gauge if the voice of teenage Pakistani girls from Lahore Grammar School will reach everyone. Three girls giggle that they have a sore throat but will be alright if given a nice long tea-break. She smiles, tells them, "Let the break be as long as you want. Just get your voices right before the show."

Noted Pakistani theatre director and activist Huma Safdar, who was in Chandigarh on the invitation of city-based Society for Promotion of Peace to stage *Birha Tu Sultan*, a play on the life of Baba Sheikh Farid Gunj Shankar in November, says there were multiple reasons that she worked only in Punjabi. "A language goes beyond nationalism. It has way too many aspects and layers to be put inside the circumference of political and geographical boundaries. Punjabi allows me to express myself creatively without barriers. For me, it is a language of love, activism and art," says the 55-year-old Safdar, a painter by training who graduated with distinction in Fine Arts from the National College of Arts in Lahore and works as an art teacher at the Lahore Grammar School.

Safdar, who became active in theatre during politically volatile times in Pakistan in 1984, and worked for more than 15 years with Punjab Lok Rehas, a group that works towards rediscovering roots, traditions and folklore, admits that Punjabi has long been ignored in her country despite the fact that a sizeable population speaks Punjabi. "Sadly, the state has always promoted Urdu. Even Punjabi speaking parents make it a point to speak to their children in Urdu. What a tragedy," she laments.

The director, who has to her credit several acclaimed theatre productions

including *Heer Waris Shah*, *Ik Raat Ravi Di* and *Sassi Pannu*, says she has always held a fondness for Punjabi love stories. "I cannot help but produce them on stage. For me, the two lovers going against the world and all its institutions showcase dissent and freedom in all its manifestations. How can one not get fascinated by them?" she asks.

Talk to her about the greater role of artists and intellectuals in raising their voice against injustice and not just writing about it, and Safdar is clear, "There was a time when the debate used to be whether art is for art's sake or otherwise. Now this new dimension has been added. We recently saw a lot of Indian writers returning prestigious honours. But I have always believed in doing my work and not saying things directly. For me, everything is in the subtext of my productions. As far as returning awards as a mark of protest is concerned, I decided quite early that I would never accept any award from the government."

Even as scores of modern-day Pakistani writers including Nadeem Aslam, Daniel Mueenudin, Kamila Shamsie and Ali Akbar Natiq have made their presence felt on the international circuit without falling in

the trap of urban alienation like many of their contemporaries in South Asia, Safdar adds, "The present socio-economic conditions and the omnipresent air of insecurity in Pakistani have definitely forced a lot of talent to think deeply about these issues and create. Imaginatively, it is an exciting time."

Safdar has always believed that the spirit of Punjabi literature is feminist for even when a poet addresses himself, he does that from a woman's perspective. During the military rule of Zia-ul-Haq, Safdar discovered how progressive Punjabi texts were. "Take the legendary love tales, the story is from the woman's point of view. What more do I say?"



“Little is being done for Punjabi in Pakistan. The state has always promoted Urdu. Even Punjabi speaking parents make it a point to speak to their children in Urdu. What a tragedy.”

Huma Safdar, Pakistani theatre director and activist

ZERO MOTIVATION IS ALL YOU NEED



ISRAELI FILMMAKER TALYA LAVIE DESPISES THE TERM WOMAN FILMMAKER SAYING IT IS DEMEANING AND TENDS TO SLOT A CREATIVE PERSON

| Filmmaker Talya Lavie; (right) a still from Lavie's film, *Zero Motivation*



By SUKANT DEEPAK

When Talya Lavie completed her compulsory military training in Israel and came backpacking to India, she met a European man who did not really pay much attention to her. Things changed when she told him she is ex-military.

As this 37-year-old filmmaker showed her first feature film, *Zero*

Motivation, released in 2014, to a packed auditorium during the Dharmsala International Film Festival held in November in McLeod Ganj (Himachal Pradesh), which invites a sizeable audience from across the country and abroad, including Chandigarh and Punjab, the director presented a very different side of the almost legendary Israeli Defense Forces (IDF).

Through the tale of three young women soldiers, the film provides a comic-tragic peek into the Israeli



military society. "I wanted to make an honest film that refrained from pleasing anyone. Israel may be one of the few countries that has mandatory military service for both genders, something which signifies equality. But very few women are given active combat roles. Majority have to be satisfied doing secretarial jobs. Underlining this dichotomy, my effort was to make a political statement," says the director, who belongs to a film industry that is essentially independent and makes low-budget films.

The filmmaker, who used to create animation flip books as a child, went on to study animation at the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem and graduated with merit from the Sam Spiegel Film School in the Israeli capital. While her thesis film, *The Substitute*, received major international awards, notably the Panorama Audience Award for Best Short Film at the prestigious

Berlin International Film Festival in 2006, *Zero Motivation* broke major box office records in her country and won six Israeli Academy Ophir Awards (the Israeli Oscars) in 2014.

Despising the term 'woman filmmaker', Lavie thinks that not only is it demeaning but also tends to slot a creative person. "When anyone approaches me saying they need a woman director for a particular project, I politely tell them to come to me only when they need a good director," she says. The director adds, "The medium of cinema is all about travelling to people's minds with your own ideas and touching their different chords. They are least bothered about gender."

But Lavie agrees that despite the fact that a lot of women are now opting for film studies and making fantastic documentaries, producers prefer men directors when it comes to feature films. She says, citing her own example, "It took me four years to find funding for *Zero Motivation*. Almost 50 percent of students in Israeli film schools are women, but a majority of them do not get an opportunity to direct a feature film."

For Lavie, who has always been inspired by the master filmmaker Federico Fellini, it was important to intentionally stay away from the word Palestinian in the film. "Every potential funder was expecting that I include the Palestinians while making a film that centres on IDF. But if you look closely, the conflict is there in the subtext. It affects our lives, not allowing us to carry on with our daily routines. 'How can you even think of anything, there is a war going on', is what we have been hearing forever."

Talk to her about how she negotiates living in a country obsessed with security, the filmmaker says, "It's not really easy for me to answer that. I grew up there. Israel is the only home I have had. Yes, our lives are very complicated and emotional. I have tried to convey some of the things I feel about our society in the film in a comic way as humour enables us to address issues in a more radical way," she concludes.

WHEN EVERYTHING BEGINS ELSEWHERE



Tishani Doshi, poet, writer and dancer

POET, WRITER AND DANCER TISHANI DOSHI'S ABILITY TO MOVE BETWEEN DIFFERENT ART FORMS GIVES HER A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE ON THE WORLD

By SUKANT DEEPAK

She is clear that poetry drives her mad. That merely reading verse is not enough for her. That ever since she was 20, she has had a secret relationship with words that open new meanings through the said and the unsaid.

For Chennai-based poet, writer and dancer Tishani Doshi, poetry remains central to her very being. “The question that where does poetry stand in the larger scheme of things keeps haunting me constantly. I am always asking—why are not more people reading it? How come?” asks the 39-year-old, who was in Chandigarh in November.

But do the two art forms she breathes, writing and dancing, in any way mirror each other? “I did not set out to be a dancer. It just happened. As far as poetry is concerned, there was a definite moment in my life when I knew I wanted to be a poet. Writing is such a solitary exercise when you are all alone with your fears and anxieties that engulf you completely. In contrast, dance for me is a collective effort. But I must add that in my case, both these art forms are complimentary and more importantly, speak to each other. Once dance entered my life, there was a sense of inevitability to

it. Writing still continues to be a surprise,” she says.

At a time when fewer poetry books are finding place on the bookshelves, Doshi stresses that it would not be right to say that people are drifting away from verse. “There may be fewer people reading poetry as compared to bestsellers but this does not mean that the committed readership of verse has dwindled,” she says.

But publishers can play a role, right? “Of course, much of poetry is being published by small presses. Major publishers have to show commitment towards publishing poetry and can always ask their bestselling authors to float verse. It is a question of economics that the writers cannot be expected to address but surely the publishers can,” Doshi adds.

Ask her if outdated syllabi at educational institutes have taken youngsters away from verse and the poet, who won the 2006 Forward Poetry Prize for best first collection *Countries of the Body*, asserts, “Definitely. Reading verse is confined to classics. No one is ready to introduce youngsters to the work being done in and for contemporary times. I have always insisted that verse should not be fossilised. Youngsters need to be shown that poetry addresses modern-day concerns. Bring in more dynamism in the syllabus, encourage experimentation and show students that there is much more to poetry than mere rhyme,” she says.

As the conversation veers towards the recent mass returning of awards by writers and intellectuals to protest against the ‘growing intolerance in the country’, Doshi, who graduated with a Masters degree in Creative Writing from John Hopkins University, says it would not be fair for a writer not to speak his or her mind. “We are sensitive people. To say nothing would be very strange. And frankly, I am not really impressed by the recent statements of the Sahitya Akademi where they finally have spoken out against the killing of rationalists.

“ I AM NOT REALLY IMPRESSED BY THE RECENT STATEMENT OF THE SAHITYA AKADEMI WHERE IT HAS FINALLY HAVE SPOKEN OUT AGAINST THE KILLING OF RATIONALISTS. WHAT TOOK THEM SO LONG TO REACT? ”

SUMMER IN MADRAS

// Everyone in the house is dying.
Mother in an air-conditioned room
// cannot hear as rivers break their dams
against her nerves. Father stalks verandas,
// offering pieces of his skin to the rows of lurid
gulmohars. Husband tries to still the advancing
// armies of the past by stuffing his ears with desiccated
mango husks. And brother? Brother is most lackadaisical of all.
// He opens the door. Takes death's umbrella.
Taps it this way and that. Sings.

Doshi's Works

- **2006** Countries of the Body (poetry)
- **2008** Conflict and Instability (poetry)
- **2010** The Pleasure Seekers (fiction)
- **2013** Everything Begins Elsewhere (poetry)
- **2015** The Adulterous Citizen: poems stories essays

What took them so long to react? After all, aren’t they supposed to represent the writers? Again, I think it is perfectly right on the writer’s part to react to what is happening around her or him,” she says.

Dismissing the criticism of the right-wing that the writers’ protest is a result of long standing ideological differences with the BJP, Doshi adds, “There comes a certain point when everything erupts and becomes a trigger. For example, the gang rape in December 2012. Also, writers have been protesting during different regimes. Just because the media did not cover those protests in a big way does not mean that they never happened.”

All for multiple literature and film festivals conquering smaller towns in India like Chandigarh, Puri, Nainital and Dharamshala, Doshi feels the same promise a forced intimacy. “In a bigger city, you may

go off somewhere. Festivals at smaller places mean that there are closer interactions with other writers. The best festivals that I have attended have always been organised in small towns in the middle of nowhere. Also, writing is such a solitary voyage. Literature festivals provide the much-needed break from the four walls,” she sighs.

At present working on two projects—a novel and a book of poems, Doshi is enjoying oscillating between the two. “I am in an unspecified space, moving from one form to another. While poetry is immediate and promises a sense of completion, a novel, in many ways assures a sense of reward on completion. Yes, I am enjoying the journeys hoping that both of them will make me come through the tunnel,” she concludes.

WEAVING A CHANGE

DESIGNER KANCHAN RANA FEELS WORKING WITH ARTISANS HAS GIVEN A UNIQUE CHARACTER TO HER DESIGNS AND LENT A NEW DIMENSION TO HER BEING

By SUKANT DEEPAK

She is a resident of Chandigarh but for the past 12 years she has made the Himalayas her home. Her quest for finding traditional artisans brought her to the mountains. She found them living in a time warp, producing what the world calls 'ethnic' handlooms. "I do not have a sense of home. Yes, I do have a feeling of not having one. But the thought that I may not like it forever scares me no end. That is the reason that I do not stay stationary anywhere for more than a year, be it Kullu, Kinnaur or Chamoli in Uttrakhand. For the outside world, it brings certain diversity in my designs, introduces my patrons to newer patterns in my clothes. For the inside world, the reasons are different," says fashion designer Kanchan Rana, who after graduating from the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) in 2004, worked in Auroville for five years.

The 32-year-old, who recently launched her fashion label *Bunni* (meaning a woman's ornaments in Pahari) with her savings amounting to Rs 2.5 lakhs, the sheer pleasure of making high-end hand-made and hand-spun garments with traditional artisans sans artificial dyes in the mountains is about finding a connect with herself.

"For someone like me who is constantly oscillating between what is real and imaginary, it makes complete sense to work with people who will not judge and sell the wares to the world that can pay up. Of course, all this while assuring that artisans get their due and are not exploited," she says.

Ensuring that the way traditional artisans work is streamlined so that designs do not get lost forever once a particular garment is sold, Rana, whose present base is Kullu, is busy getting the system in place. "I keep a record of all the data so that this it is available forever and these artisans can, to some extent, think of consistent collections and mass orders," she says.

Talking about working and living with these artisans constantly and if her urban sensibilities are ever disturbed by their lifestyle, Rana says, "How would you react if asked by the locals to bathe with cow's urine because you visited the house of a so-called low caste artisan?

I cannot say no when I am living in a local's house. Yes, it can demolish you. It took me quite some time to get used to the face that I am not an activist but a designer who needs to work with these people and get work done by them. And then people call me cynical if I laugh at the multiple 'social' problems faced by people my age living in

an urban landscape."

Rana feels the mass import of garments from China and Thailand hurts the traditional artisans in ways more than one. "It's not just about the sales but also the effect on the confidence of the traditional artisans. Does anybody realise what they go through when they see these garments getting sold like hot cakes even in their areas. They start





Kanchan Rana, fashion designer

“THE LOCALS EXPECT YOU TO BATHE WITH COW'S URINE BECAUSE YOU VISITED THE HOUSE OF A SO-CALLED LOW CASTE ARTISAN. HOW DO YOU SAY NO WHEN YOU HAVE TO SURVIVE THERE? ”

Kanchan Rana, Fashion Designer

thinking that their designs need to be ‘modern’. I am no economist but I feel we opened up the markets without even gauging if the natives were strong enough to compete. Such an unfair war!” she says,

The government might have set up more than 500 weaving units in Kinnaur to train young people in learning traditional textile crafts, but Rana feels important gaps still

need to be bridged. “Whatever is produced in these units can’t be bought by the Khadi Village Industries Board because no natural dying unit has been set up with the 500 units. Little is being done on the social front for the upliftment of the status of artisans. Some NGOs, instead of just focussing on issues in urban areas, can start working here too,” she signs off.

UNREADING HAPPINESS IN BHUTAN



BHUTANESE FILMMAKER DECHEN RODER INSISTS THERE IS MUCH MORE TO BHUTAN THAN THE POPULAR HAPPINESS NARRATIVE

By SUKANT DEEPAK

Her five friends pooled in money to give her a handycam as a farewell gift as she was set to board her flight to Bhutan from the US.

That is how this filmmaker's journey started.

Roder, who completed her graduation in History from Macalester College in Minnesota in 2004, set out to shoot solo, ignoring all the 'prescribed' norms of filmmaking in the country and without any formal film education, which she insists helped her develop her own style. "I have never regretted not studying cinema. The lack of formal education has helped me see visuals in a peculiar and intimate manner," says this 35-year-old. What emerged on the edit table were more than moving visuals. "I could see a strange interplay of my conscious and subconscious. I was hooked, and there was no looking back," says Roder, whose first fiction short film, *An Original Photocopy of Happiness*, was nominated for Best Short Film at the Brussels International Independent Film Festival in 2012 and won the Jury Mention at the same festival.

In a country strongly influenced by the Hindi film industry, complete with long song and

dance sequences, telling tales in an alternate voice has always had its challenges for Roder, who admits she can count alternate filmmakers on her fingers. "It is always tough to break norms for the fear that you may be dismissed as a rebel without a cause. But I have always wanted to tell a true tale without any ornamentation that distracts the viewer from the core. It is really tough not to follow the mainstream, especially in the face of no standardised state support and negligible corporate support," says the filmmaker, who showed her short film, *Lo Sum Choe Sum*, at the Dharamshala International Film Festival (DIFF) held at McLeod Ganj in Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh, in November.

As the conversation veers towards the much hyped 'happiness quotient' in her country, the filmmaker says that though she is glad

that the factor is important in the country's scheme of things, it is high time that the international community looked at Bhutan beyond the same. "Also, internally the happiness rhetoric can really create a fatigue. Isn't it something difficult to measure? Frankly, the outside world is keeping up this rhetoric. The west really seems to be infatuated by it. I get mails from several filmmakers across the world who want to come to Bhutan and work on the happiness theme," she says.

Roder, who co-founded and organised Bhutan's first and only documentary and short film festival, Beskop Tshechu, which started in 2011, and is currently developing her first feature film, admits she does miss making documentary films now. "I shifted to fiction but now I miss the former for the intimacy it offered. Not to mention the fact that it offered immense scope for experimentation and did not involve many people."

Roder's fascination towards the arts started when she was a student at Woodstock in Mussoorie, from where she graduated in 1998. "I loved the idea of producing plays. Creative communication always thrilled me at school. I guess the seeds of cinema were sown in my mind in that tiny Indian hill station."

FILMOGRAPHY

- 2015 **Heart in the Mandala**
(Short Film)
- 2015 **3 Year 3 Month Retreat**
(Short Film)
- 2013 **Nging tsey Mi tsaye Kilkhor**
(Short Film)
- 2011 **She Sings** (Documentary)
- 2011 **An Original Photocopy of Happiness** (Short Film)



■ Dechen Roder, filmmaker

Photograph by SANDEEP SAHDEV

A NEW RELIGION CALLED HATE

Strangely, it's not a visible or tangible religion. But it stealthily follows you like a shadow till it becomes an intrinsic part of your thinking.

The Gods and the Gurus are anxious. In a land where they have ruled for thousands of years, they are now being challenged. The *maryada* of Shri Ram, the wisdom and sagacity of Lord Krishna, the serenity of Gautam Buddha and the compassion of Guru Nanak and Kabir are all under siege. There's a new religion in town and it's called Hatred, Intolerance. And somehow, its popularity is surging ahead unprecedented as it laps up more and more followers each day.

Strangely, it's not a visible or tangible religion. But it stealthily follows you like a shadow till it becomes an intrinsic part of your thinking. Picture a bond of two young men who are great friends. They like the same movies, same food, same restaurants. They engage in a friendly banter discussing girls, porn and livelihood. It's as if nothing can segregate them. They're so alike. And all's well if both profess the same religion. But if they're not, then a little mention of who's right and wrong in their religion and you have a mini Diwali on hands. Nostrils flared, profanities galore, they're ready to insult and demean. The fragile threads of friendship, camaraderie so easily snapped with differing views and religious beliefs. 'Hail Intolerance' is the new Nazi now.

I wonder how goodness has clay feet, while the demon of hate cements itself so strongly? Why do the dwellings of generosity and compassion get washed away so easily with the tsunami of intolerance? How is bestiality of man so easily aroused while his goodness is so dormant?

Have our Gods failed us or have we failed our Gods and Gurus?

Balraj Sahni, one of India's finest actors asked Nobel laureate Rabindra Nath Tagore that he had written a national anthem for India and could he write an international anthem for the whole world? To this Tagore replied that it had already been written, not only for the world but for the entire universe. He was referring to the *aarti* composed by Guru Nanak Devji. As the legend goes, the Guruji was visiting the famous temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri. In the evening the priests brought a platter full of many lamps, flowers, incense and pearls and began the *aarti*. Guru Nanak Devji noticed that the priests were more interested in the rituals than praising the glory of God. The Guru, experiencing the ecstasy of the Lord, spontaneously gave words to the wonderful *aarti*:

Gagan mah thaal, Rav-chand Deepak baney

Taarka mandal Janak Moti

Dhoop maliaanlo Pavan chavaro karey

Sagal Banrai phoolant jyoti

Kaisee Aarti hoi Bhaykandana Teree Aarti

(The sky is your platter,

The sun and moon are the lamps,

The stars in the sky are the pearls,

The incense is the fragrance,

That the wind propels,

The whole forest is your flowers

O! What a wonderful aarti this is!)

An inspirational moment was born because neither Guru Nanak, nor Tagore were trapped by their own views.

A humbled Guru Nanak didn't decry the rituals that were against his philosophy. A humbled Tagore too didn't reject a religious thought different from his.

Hinduism has throughout ages given shelter and birth to so many new religions. Gautam Buddha talked of human suffering and the abolition of desire. The mystic Islamic sufis surrendered in the love of the Almighty. Sant Kabir, Mirabai, Farid all talked about the universality of our love, relationships and suffering. The Gods and Gurus took the the right journey.

So why do we fail the people who have taught us to live right? We think that by offering our gold chains, coins, a thick wad of rupees as our *bhakti* before the gods, that we own them. We own the religion too. So on behalf of our God and Guru, we decide what everybody eats. We will decide that if punishment is to be given then, we drag a man from his house, and beat him till he dies. We decide that we own the religion so we will brandish swords in the temple and toss each other's turbans around. Isn't the Guru you fight for is the man who gave you the pride of wearing the turban?

The Gods are anxious. Not because they fear an end to their supremacy. They are not mean and petty like us. Gods worry because He has made us in his mould. He worries for us like a parent. He knows that with this new call for intolerance, his children are becoming mean, hateful and revengeful. And that is his failure as a parent.

We have failed our Gods.

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